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T O

SIR RICHARD COLT HOARE, BART.

MY DEAR SIR,

AN HISTORICAL TOUR in MONMOUTHSHIRE, commenced in Your Company, written at Your Suggestion, and embellished by Your Pencil, is inscribed to You with peculiar propriety; and I am happy in this public opportunity of expressing those sentiments of esteem and regard, with which I am

Your sincere and

much obliged Friend,

WILLIAM COXE.

BEMERTON,
October 1, 1800.

This Work was intended to be comprised in one Volume, and is paged accordingly; but the extent of the Narrative, and the number of PLATES, which amount to no less than Ninety, having swelled it beyond the limits originally proposed, it was deemed too bulky for a single Volume, and is therefore divided into Two Parts.

C O N T E N T S.

PART THE FIRST.

PREFACE — — — — — page i to viii

INTRODUCTION; page *1 to *32; viz.

SECTION 1. Monmouthshire.—Situation and Boundaries.—Rivers.—Hundreds.—Population.—Languages.—Situation in the Roman, British, Saxon, and Norman Periods.—Reduced to an English County	— — — — — page *1
SECT. 2. Roman Stations and Roads in Monmouthshire.—Course of the Julia Strata from Bath to the Confines of Glamorganshire	— — — — — *11
SECT. 3. Ancient Encampments.—Castles.—Churches	— — — — — *22

T O U R.

CHAPTER I. Passage of the Severn.—Charlton Rock.—Black Rock and House.—St. Pierre.—Ancient Tomb.—Pedigree of the Lewis Family	— — — — — 1
Chap. 2. Mathern.—Ancient Residence of the Bishops of Landaff.—Church.—Inscription on King Theodorick.—Moinecourt.—Runton	— — — — — 7
Chap. 3. Sudbrook Encampment.—Chapel.—Portfewit.—Caldecot Castle	— — — — — 15
Chap. 4. Crick.—Caerwent.—Roman Antiquities.—Present State.—Dinham	— — — — — 24
Chap. 5. Castles of Penhow, Pencoed, Lanvair, and Striguil.—Bertholly House—Views from the Pencamawr, and Kemeys Folly	— — — — — 30
Chap. 6. Road to Newport.—Christchurch.—Excursion to Lanwern and Goldcliff.—Remains of the Priory.—Sea Walls	— — — — — 39
Chap. 7. Newport.—Bridge.—Situation.—Population.—Commerce.—Canal.—Castle.—History and Proprietors.—Church of St. Woolos.—Anecdote on the construction of the Tower.—Account of St. Woolos.—Caerau.—Ancient Religious Establishments	— — — — — 45

Chap. 8.

CONTENTS.

Chap. 8.	Excursions from Newport to the South-western Boundaries of Monmouthshire.—Upper Road to Caerdiff.—Encampment of the Gaer.—Baffaleg.—Craeg y Saeffon.—New Park Encampment.—Lanvihangel Vedw.—Kevenmably.—St. Melons.—Runney.—Lower Road from Caerdiff to Newport.—Castleton.—Tredeggar.—Morgan Family.—Machen Place and Church.—Bedwas — — — — — page 58	
Chap. 9.	Level of Wentloog.—Sea Walls.—Greenfield Castle.—Churches of St. Bride's, Peteriton, and Marshfield.—Excursion to Twyn Barlwm — — — — — 71	
Chap. 10.	Road from Newport to Caerleon.—Malpas Church.—Caerleon.—Etymology.—Roman Antiquities.—Walls.—Circumference.—Amphitheatre.—Suburbs, or Ultra Pontem.—Castle.—Ancient Encampments in the Vicinity — — — — — 78	
Chap. 11.	History of Caerleon after the Departure of the Romans.—King Arthur.—Knights of the Round Table.—Church of St. Cadoc.—Ancient Abbey.—Castle.—Modern History, and present State of Caerleon.—Bridge.—Singular Escape of Mrs. Williams — 92	
Chap. 12.	St. Julian's.—Memoirs of Lord Herbert of Cherbury — — — — — 103	
Chap. 13.	Lantarnam House.—Branch of the Morgan Family.—Upper Road to Ufk.—Langibby House and Castle.—Family of Williams.—Lower Road to Ufk.—Kemeys House.—Inscription in Tredonnoc Church.—Lantrifaint.—Lanllowel.—Vale of Ufk — 115	
Chap. 14.	Town of Ufk.—Ancient Burrium.—Castle.—History and Proprietors.—Church.—Inscription.—Priory.—Encampments of Craeg y Gaercyd, Campwood, and Coed y Bunedd — — — — — 124.	
Chap. 15.	Raglan Castle and History.—Proprietors.—Anecdotes of William Herbert Earl of Pembroke, of Sir Charles Somerset first Earl, and of Henry first Marquis of Worcester.—Siege, Surrender, and Demolition of the Castle.—Church.—Cemetery.—Character of Edward Earl of Glamorgan and second Marquis of Worcester — — — — — 136.	
Chap. 16.	Lanfanfraed House and Church.—Pant y Goytre.—Clytha House and Castle.—Lanarth Court.—Trostre Forge.—Kemeys Commander.—Trostre House and Church.—Betws Newydd — — — — — 155	
Chap. 17.	Abergavenny.—Circumjacent Mountains.—The Blorengc.—Sugar Loaf.—Skyrrid.—Establishment of the Free School — — — — — 164	
Chap. 18.	Tudor's Gate.—Ruins of Abergavenny Castle.—History and different Proprietors — — — — — 172	
Chap. 19.	Ancient Parish Church.—Priory.—St. Mary's Church.—Herbert Chapel.—Monuments.—Sir William ap Thomas.—Sir Richard Herbert of Coldbrook.—Sir Richard Herbert of Ewias.—Other Sepulchral Memorials.—Epitaph on the Roberts Family — — — — — 182	
Chap. 20.	Excursions to the Summits of the Sugar Loaf and Great Skyrrid — — — — — 195	
Chap. 21.	Twy Dec.—Werndee.—Ancient Seat of the Herbert Family.—Landcilo Bertholly.—Ancient Grant.—Excursion to the Dery, Rolben, and Lanwenarth Hills.—View from the Summit of the Little Skyrrid — — — — — 202	

DIRECTIONS FOR THE PLATES.

As some of the Plates contain two or more Subjects, described in different Parts of the Work, the Chapters in which each of those Subjects are respectively mentioned, are specified in this List. A few Mistakes made by the Engraver, in some of the Names, are also here corrected.

PART THE FIRST.

I. M A P S.

1. **T**HE Map of Monmouthshire - - to face the Introduction, page *I.
2. Containing

Plan of the Via Julia from Bath to the Severn - - - -	}	- *II.
General Sketch of the Roman Roads and Stations in Monmouthshire and Wales, and the adjacent counties - -		

II. V I E W S.

1. St. Pierre, chap. 1. - - - - - } to face page 3.
Moinscourt Gateway, chap. 2. - - - - -
2. Episcopal Palace at Mathem (Mathern) - - - - - 7.
3. Sudbrook Chapel - - - - - }
Keep of Caldecot Castle - - - - - } - - - 16.
4. South-east View of Caldecot Castle - - - - - 19.
5. Part of the Eastern Entrance of Caerwent - - - - }
A Bastion of the South Wall - - - - - } - - - 26.
6. Penhow Castle and Church, chap. 5. - - - - }
Mansion of Pencoed, chap. 5. - - - - - } - - - 32.

7. Castle

DIRECTIONS FOR THE PLATES.—PART I.

7. Castle of Pencoed - - - - -	to face page	34.
8. Ruins of Lanvair Castle - - - - -		36.
9. Ruins of Striguil Castle - - - - -		38.
10. Christchurch, chap. 6. - - - - -	}	40.
Malpas Church, chap. 10. - - - - -		
11. Bridge and Castle at Newport - - - - -		45.
12. Inside View of the Church of St. Woolos at Newport - - - - -		53.
13. Baffaleg, chap. 8. - - - - -	}	59.
Machen Place - - - - -		
14. Front and Back View of the Round Tower, near the Han- bury Arms - - - - -	}	89.
Ruins near the Bridge - - - - -		
Remains of the Castle Works near the Ufk - - - - -		
South Angle of the Roman Walls at Caerleon - - - - -		
15. Town and Bridge of Caerleon - - - - -		100.
16. Front View of St. Julian's - - - - -	}	103.
Back View of St. Julian's - - - - -		
17. Bridge and Castle of Ufk - - - - -		126.
18. Ufk Church - - - - -	}	132.
Porch of Ufk Priory - - - - -		
19. Raglan Castle - - - - -		138.
20. Inside View of Raglan Castle - - - - -		140.
21. Clytha Gateway - - - - -		157.
22. Clytha Castle - - - - -		158.
23. Abergavenny, with a distant View of the Skyrriid - - - - -		164.
24. Werndec, chap. 21. - - - - -	}	203.
Pertlhir, chap. 33. - - - - -		
Treowen, chap. 33, and - - - - -		
Caeluch, Appendix, No. 11. - - - - -		

III. PORTRAITS,

DIRECTIONS FOR THE PLATES.—PART I.

III. PORTRAITS, &c.

1. Lord Herbert of Cherbury - - - - -	<i>to face page</i> 105.
2. Sir Charles Somerfet, first Earl of Worcester - - - - -	142.
3. Henry Somerfet, first Marquis of Worcester - - - - -	144.
4. Edward, second Marquis of Worcester and Earl of Glamorgan - - - - -	151.
5. Monumental Effigies of Sir William ap Thomas - - - - -	186.
6. Monumental Effigies of Sir Richard Herbert - - - - -	188.
7. Major Hanbury - - - - -	236.
8. Sir Charles Hanbury Williams * - - - - -	271.

IV. PLANS OF TOWNS.

1. Plan of Caerwent, or VENTA SILURUM - - - - -	25.
2. Town and Liberties of Newport - - - - -	46.
3. Plan of Caerleon, or ISCA SILURUM - - - - -	81.
4. Plan of Usk - - - - -	125.
5. Plan of Abergavenny - - - - -	167.

V. GROUND PLANS OF ANCIENT CASTLES AND ENCAMPMENTS.

1. Encampments in the Vicinity of Oldcastle :	
Pwl y Bala, near Campston - - - - -	}
Gwen Castle - - - - -	
Coed y Crafel - - - - -	
Walterston - - - - -	
On the Summit of the Gaer - - - - -	
Above Trewyn Houfe - - - - -	
These Encampments are alluded to in the Introduction, Section 2, and in chapter 23. - - - - -	

2. Portscwit

* The Reader is desired to correct the Inscription at the bottom of this Plate, which should be *Duncombe* not *Duncan Davies*.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE PLATES.—PART I.

2. Portswit Encampment - - - - -	}	<i>to face page 15.</i>
Ground Plan of Caldecot Castle - - - - -		
3. Ground Plans of Penhow - - - - -	}	- - - - - 33.
Pencoed - - - - -		
Lanvair and - - - - -		
Striguil Castles, chap. 5. - - - - -		
4. Ground Plans of Newport Castle, chap. 7. - - - - -	}	- - - - - 49.
Langibby Castle, chap. 13. - - - - -		
Ufk Castle, chap. 14. - - - - -		
Abergavenny Castle, chap. 18. - - - - -		
5. Encampment of the Gaer in Tredegar Park - - - - -	}	- - - - - 60.
Craeg y Saefon, and - - - - -		
Pen y Parc Newydd, chap. 8. - - - - -		
6. Tumulus and Entrenchment of Twyn Barlwm, chap. 9. - - - - -	}	- - - - - 75.
Encampments of Pen y Pill and Rumney, chap. 8. - - - - -		
7. Encampments of the Lodge - - - - -	}	- - - - - 90.
Penros - - - - -		
Mayndee, and - - - - -		
St. Julian's - - - - -		
8. Encampments of Coed y Bunedd - - - - -	}	- - - - - 134.
Campwood, and - - - - -		
Craeg y Gaercydd - - - - -		
9. Ground Plan of Raglan Castle - - - - -		- - - - - 137.

P R E F A C E.

THE present work owes its origin to an accidental excursion into Monmouthshire, in company with my friend sir Richard Hoare, during the autumn of 1798. I was delighted with the beauties of the scenery; I was struck with the picturesque ruins of ancient castles memorable in the annals of history, and I was animated with the view of mansions distinguished by the residence of illustrious persons; objects which the sketches of my friend's pencil rendered more impressive.

On my return I examined my notes, perused the principal books relating to Monmouthshire, and convinced that so interesting a county deserved particular notice, formed the plan of a tour, which should combine history and description, and illustrate both with the efforts of the pencil. Sir Richard Hoare strongly encouraged me in my undertaking, offered to accompany me again into Monmouthshire, and to supply me with additional views.

Accordingly, in the spring of 1799, I explored the county in various directions, and received assistance from many gentlemen and men of letters; but as the materials were still defective, and as want of time and unfavourable weather prevented me from visiting the sequestered and mountainous districts, I made a third excursion in the autumn of the same year.

In the course of these three journeys I employed five months, and traversed 1500 miles, and now present to the public the result of my observations and researches.

In this work the reader must not expect to find a regular history of Monmouthshire, but a description of the principal places, intermixed with historical relations and biographical anecdotes, and embellished with the most striking views, for which I am principally indebted to my friend sir Richard Hoare, whose persevering zeal and activity claim my warmest gratitude.

To his grace the duke of Beaufort, I beg leave to express my grateful acknowledgments for empowering his agents in Monmouthshire to supply me with information, and for permitting me to have drawings taken from the portraits of his illustrious ancestors at Badminton and Troy house, from which I have given engravings of sir Charles Somerset, first earl of Worcester, of the gallant defender of Raglan castle, and of Edward, second marquis of Worcester.

To the following gentlemen of the county, who favoured me with a kind and hospitable reception, and promoted my researches, I am proud to acknowledge my obligations and gratitude :

William Dinwoodie, esq. of Twydee.

James Green, esq. of Lanfandraed, M. P. for Arundel.

John Jones, esq. of Lanarth Court.

William Jones, esq. of Clytha House.

William Kemeys, esq. of Mayndee.

Capel Hanbury Leigh, esq. of Pont y Pool Park.

Charles Lewis, esq. of St. Pierre.

Richard Lewis, esq. of Landeilo.

Sir Charles Morgan, of Tredegar, bart. member for the county.

William Nicholl, esq. of Caerleon.

Benjamin Waddington, esq. of Lanover, now high sheriff for the county.

Mark Wood, esq. of Piercefield, M. P. for Newark, formerly chief engineer at Bengal.

Also to George Kemeys, esq. of Malpas.

John Rickards, esq. proprietor of Lanfandraed.

Sir Robert Salusbury, of Lanwern, Bart. M. P. for Brecknock, and

Thomas Swinnerton, esq. of Butterton hall in Staffordshire, and of Wonaftow house in the county of Monmouth.

In regard to literary assistance and local information, my first acknowledgments are due to the Rev. Mr. Evans, vicar of St. Woolos, for his active co-operation, and indefatigable exertions, as well during my continuance in the county, as by a constant correspondence since my return.

To Thomas Jennings, esq. collector of the Customs of Chepstow, I am considerably indebted for various communications, and numerous sketches, which have greatly assisted in elucidating the work.

My thanks are likewise particularly due to

The Rev. Duncombe Davies, vicar of St. Mary's Monmouth.

The Rev. William Jones, of the Piftill.

The Rev. John Mulso, of Abergavenny.

The Rev. William Powell, of White house, near Abergavenny, now seated at Leidet, near Monmouth.

The Rev. Thomas Proffer, lecturer of the Free School at Monmouth.

The Rev. William Roberts, of Perthir.

And to the Rev. John Williams, vicar of Pont y pool.

Nor can I withhold a tribute of gratitude for the valuable assistance which I derived from Mr. Owen Tudor, bookseller at Monmouth, and his two sons, Messrs. John and Thomas Tudor, who vied with each other in rendering me service, and from whom I received numerous Plans and Sketches.

Mr. William Owen, the learned author of the Welsh and English Dictionary, kindly obliged me with various interesting communications relating to the history and language of Wales, and the dialect of Gwent, most of which are inserted in the Appendix.

The earl of Liverpool, chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, having granted permission to consult the archives, R. J. Harper, esq. deserves my best thanks for his readiness and zeal in facilitating my enquiries.

I must also express my acknowledgments to Francis Townshend, esq. Windfor Herald, for liberally opening the records of the Heralds' Office, and elucidating the pedigrees of several illustrious families.

Without the kind assistance of my friend the Rev. Thomas Leman, whose

knowledge of Roman antiquities is unquestionable, I should have not have presumed to give the Introductory chapter, and maps relating to the Roman stations and roads. But notwithstanding his valuable communications, which ascertain the direction of the Julia Strata from Bath to the banks of the Severn, and the position of the stations in Monmouthshire and the adjacent counties, I am too conscious of my scanty acquaintance with this branch of antiquities, and the difficulty of the subject, not to be apprehensive, that the antiquary will find great deficiency in this part of the work.

To my friend Henry Penruddocke Wyndham, esq. M. P. for the county of Wilts, and author of the first interesting Tour in Monmouthshire and Wales, my thanks are due for communicating Grimm's drawing of the inside view of Tintern abbey, and for the use of his valuable library.

I cannot close the list of benefactors to this work, without expressing my gratitude for the valuable assistance I derived from my friend Francis Freeling, esq. secretary to the post-masters general; he favoured me with letters to the principal post-masters of the county; he procured me access to the plans of the post roads preserved in the office, which greatly contributed to the improvement of the map, and obtained the tables of exports and imports, from the late much lamented Thomas Irving, esq. inspector general of the exports and imports.

To Miss Edith Palmer, of Bath, I owe the elegant views of Clytha castle and gateway, with the chain of mountains and hills in the neighbourhood of Abergavenny, of Lanover church, and of the ruins of Abergavenny castle.

The antiquities of the county are illustrated with plans of the Roman stations, and ground plots of the principal castles and encampments, taken from actual surveys by Mr. Thomas Morrice, land surveyor, of Caerdiff; the biographical anecdotes are accompanied with the portraits of memorable persons, most of which have never been engraved; and Mr. Byrne, of whose talents as an artist any eulogium is unnecessary, must not be omitted in my acknowledgments, for the masterly execution of the plates which he engraved.

I am

I am happy to be able to add a plan of the celebrated grounds of Piercefield, kindly communicated by colonel Wood.

In the course of the work I have cited my authorities, and have given, at the end of the Appendix, a list of the books principally consulted on this occasion.

The names of the places are chiefly written according to the Welsh orthography, a few instances excepted, which are authorized by long custom. I have likewise, with the assistance of Mr. Owen, subjoined an explanation of the common names employed in the course of this work, and the mode of their pronunciation.

The map which accompanies this work, was compiled by Mr. Nathaniel Coltman, from the best authorities which could be procured.

The boundaries of the county on the sides of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, and Glamorganshire, were delineated from Taylor's surveys of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire; and from Yates's survey of Glamorganshire; the boundaries on the side of Brecknockshire are taken from the maps of South Wales, the plan of the Monmouthshire and Brecknockshire canal, and corrected by my own observations.

The latitude and longitude of Monmouth, which differ materially from those of former delineations, were corrected by Mr. Arrowsmith, from whose kind communications the map received considerable improvement.

The principal high roads are laid down from the surveys of the post roads, made by order of the post-masters general.

The canals, rail-roads, and the adjacent country, are given from the plan of the Monmouthshire and Brecknockshire canals, by Mr. T. Dadford, jun. engineer.

The rest of the interior of the county is filled up from the best authorities extant, and the whole has been augmented and corrected, from my own journals and observations.

DIRECTIONS for pronouncing particular letters in WELSH ORTHOGRAPHY.

(Communicated by Mr. Owen.)

WELSH LETTERS.	THEIR POWERS.	WELSH LETTERS.	THEIR POWERS.
C - - -	κ	F - - - -	v, where ff is used for the f.
Ch, or ç - -	with a strong guttural pronunciation, as the Greek χ, or as ch, in the German.	I - - - -	EE.
Dd, or z -	TH, in <i>them</i> .	Ll - - - -	HL, or L aspirated.
Th - - -	TH, in <i>thought</i> .	U - - - -	I, in <i>bliss, this, &c.</i>
G - - -	G, in <i>good</i> .	W - - - -	OO.
		X - - - -	U, in <i>burn</i> .

Vowels circumflexed are long, as in English monosyllables with an *e* final; as *Bôn, bone; Mân, mane, &c.*

There are no quiescent letters; nor do they alter, or undergo any modification of sound: All the vowels are pronounced, even when two or three follow each other.

A List of Common WELSH WORDS, occasionally employed in the course of this Work.

WORDS.	PRONUNCIATION.	MEANING.
Aber - - - - -	- - - - -	} a confluence, or the fall of one river into another.
Afon - - - - -	Avon - - - - -	
Allt, or Gallt - - - - -	- - - - -	a cliff.
Bach; fem. and in composition fach - - - - -	- - - - -	little.
Bryn; in composition fryn, or vryn - - - - -	- - - - -	a hill.
Caer; in composition Gaer - - - - -	- - - - -	a fort.

Coed;

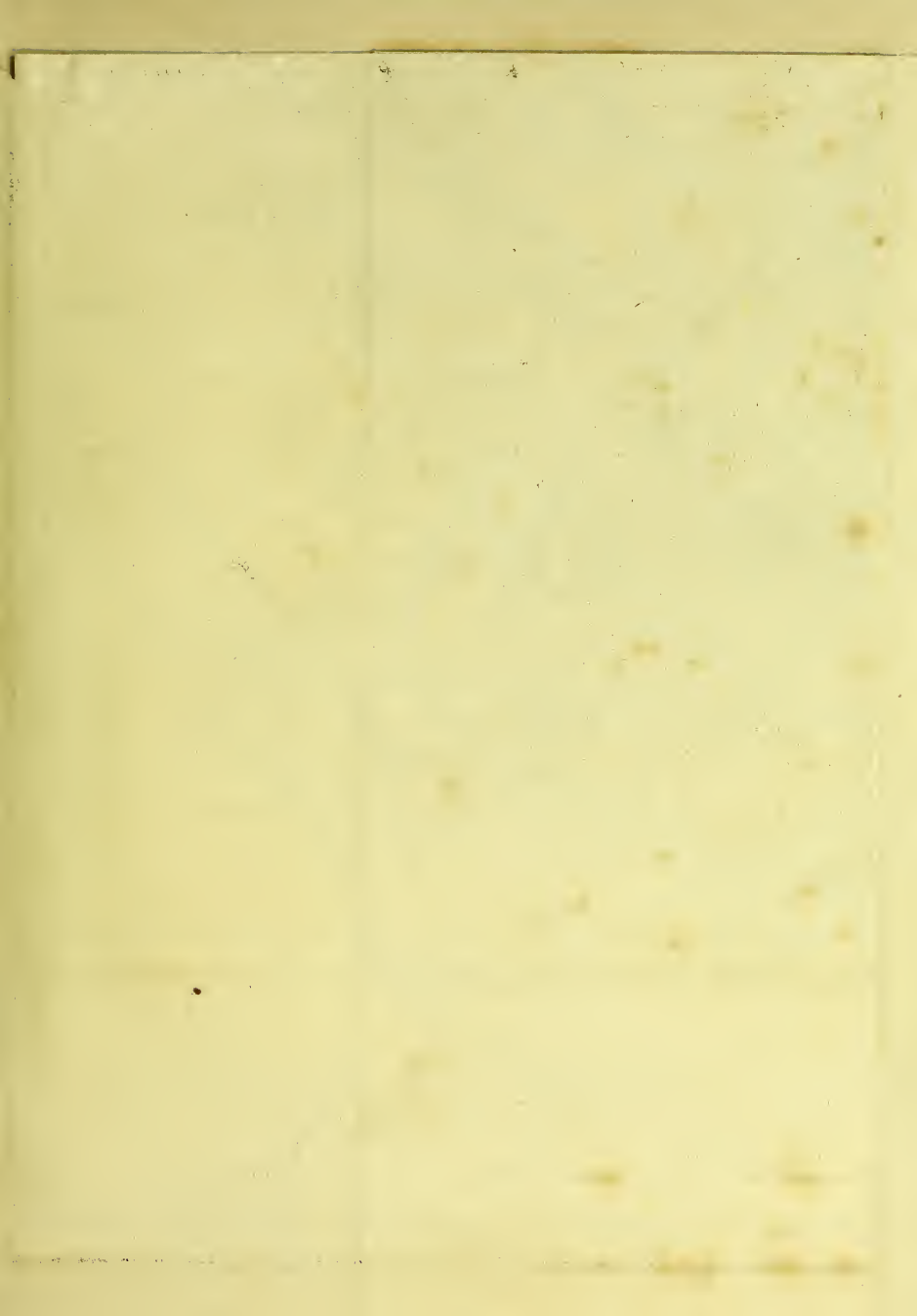
WORDS.	PRONUNCIATION.	MEANING.
Coed - - - - -	Coyd - - -	a wood.
Cefn - - - - -	Keven - - -	a ridge.
Carn - - - - -	- - - - -	a heap of stones.
Clawdd - - - - -	Clawthe - - -	a dike.
Craig; in composition Graig - - - - -	- - - - -	a rock or cliff.
Cwm - - - - -	Coom - - -	a glen, or deep valley.
Du - - - - -	dee } - - -	black.
Fem. and in composition Ddu - - - - -	thee }	
Fach; fem. of Bach - - - - -	vach.	
Fawr; fem. of Mawr - - - - -	vawr.	
Glan; in composition Lan - - - - -	- - - - -	a bank.
Gwern; and in composition Wern - - - - -	- - - - -	a watery meadow.
Gwyn; fem. Gwen; in composition } Wyn, and fem. Wen. - - - }	- - - - -	white.
Llan; in composition Lan - - - - -	Hlan - - -	a church.
Llech; in composition Lech - - - - -	Hlech - - -	a flag or flat stone.
Maen; in composition faen - - - - -	Maïn - - -	a stone.
Maes; in composition faes - - - - -	- - - - -	a field; an open plain.
Mawr; fem. and in composition fawr - - - - -	- - - - -	great.
Mynydd; in composition fynydd - - - - -	Myneth - - -	a mountain, or hill.
Pant; in composition Bant - - - - -	- - - - -	a hollow.
Pen; in composition Ben - - - - -	- - - - -	a head, top, or end.
Sarn - - - - -	- - - - -	a causeway.
Tref or Tre; in composition Dref - - - - -	Trè - - -	a township.
Ty; in composition dy - - - - -	Tee - - -	a house.

ERRATA.

-
- Page 2. l. 4. *for a larger island, read an island.*
 33. l. 12. *before the, insert in.*
 37. l. 13. *read to Mr. Gardenor.*
 45. l. 8. *from bottom, for forty-two, read forty-five.*
 83. l. 5. *from bottom, for Secundæ, read Secunda.*
 85. l. 12. *for Mr. Nichols, read Mr. Nicholl.*
 90. l. 6. *after there, insert is.*
 97. l. 3. *of the Note, first column, for 27, read 57.*
 Ib. l. 10. *of the second column, for tempore read tempore.*
 131. Note. *The line of descent in the Pedigree should be carried from Sir Richard Herbert and Margaret his wife, to Sir William, Baron Herbert, &c.*
 174. l. 6. *after de dele in.*
 180. l. 10. *for son read grandson.*
 Ib. l. 12. *for brother, read cousin.*
 203. l. 11 and 12. *dele what is included in the crotchets.*
 214. l. 13. *after well, insert as.*
 262. l. 1. *for but, read which.*
 330. l. last. *for Bach, sixth son of Cadivor ap Gwaithvoed, or Cadivor Vawr, read Bach, sixth son of Gwaithvoed, and brother of Cadivor Vawr.*
 333. l. 8. *from bottom, dele to.*
 335. l. 3. *from bottom, after and insert on.*
 350. l. 6. *for right, read left.*
 Ib. l. 7. *for left read right.*
 368. l. 17. *for proof, read roof.*
 411. l. 5. *of the second column of the Note, for Myvy read Myvyr.*
 418. l. 15. *for forfan read forfan.*
-

In page 184, I was mistaken, in asserting that the seat of the prior in the church of Abergavenny is surmounted with a mitre: I was deceived by the appearance of the gothic ornaments, which are extremely dilapidated. The mistake was kindly corrected by my friend Mr. Dinwoody.

In page 219, the site of Lanthony Abbey is said to be the property of the earl of Oxford, but since that sheet was printed, colonel Wood of Piercefield has purchased all the property of the earl of Oxford in the parish of Cwmyoi, and those beautiful remains now belong to the proprietor of Piercefield.



MONMOUTHSHIRE

by
Nat. Coltman



Explanation

- Turnpike Roads
- Bye Roads
- Rail Roads
- Towns
- Parishes & Villages
- Encampments
- Canals
- Rivers

Scale of Statute Miles

3° West from Greenwich

INTRODUCTION.

SECTION I.

Monmouthshire.—Situation and Boundaries.—Rivers.—Hundreds.—Population.—Languages.—Situation in the Roman, British, Saxon, and Norman Periods.—Reduced to an English County.

MONMOUTHSHIRE, which derives its name from the capital town, though now an English county, may be justly considered the connecting link between England and Wales; as it unites the scenery, manners, and language of both. It is surrounded by the counties of Somerset, Gloucester, Hereford, Brecknock, and Glamorgan; from which it is principally separated by the Severn, the Wy, the Monnow, and the Rumney.

The principal rivers which traverse Monmouthshire are the Wy, the Usk, and the Rumney. The Wy is navigable during its whole course through the county; the Usk, by means of the tide, from New Bridge near Tredonnoc; and the Rumney only from the bridge, not three miles from its mouth. The Trothy and the Monnow, joined by the Honddy at Altyrynnys, fall into the Wy near Monmouth; and the Usk is swelled by numerous mountain torrents, of which the principal are the Gavenny, the Kebby, the Olwy, the Berthin, the Torvaen or Aron Lwyd, and the Ebwy, which receives the Sorwy.

The county sends two members to parliament, and is divided into the six hundreds of Abergavenny, Scenfreth, Wentloog, Usk, Raglan, and Caldecot. The population may be conjectured from the number of men between fifteen and sixty, returned in 1798 in the several hundreds as capable of bearing arms, which

amounted to 11,835*. If the proportion of the males between fifteen and sixty may be estimated at one fourth of the whole population, including both sexes, the number of souls in the county of Monmouth will be 47,340, or in round numbers 48,000.

Monmouthshire is comprised in the diocese of Landaff, except Dixon, Welsh Bicknor, and St. Mary's church in Monmouth, which belong to the diocese of Hereford, as do Cwmyoy, Oldcastle, and Lanthony, to that of St. David.

The Welsh language is more prevalent than is usually supposed: in the north-eastern, eastern, and south-eastern parts, the English tongue is in common use; but in the south-western, western, and north-western districts, the Welsh, excepting in the towns, is generally spoken. The natives of the midland parts are accustomed to both languages; in several places divine service is performed wholly in Welsh, in others in English, and in some alternately in both. The natives of the western parts, which are sequestered and mountainous, unwillingly hold intercourse with the English, retain their ancient prejudices, and still brand them with the name of *Saxons*; this antipathy, however, is gradually decreasing, by means of the establishment of English schools, and the introduction of English manners, customs, and manufactures.

The language spoken in the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan is the Gwentian, or one of the three principal dialects of Wales, in which many of the best Welsh odes are composed. Specimens of this dialect, together with a critical disquisition on its characteristics, kindly communicated by Mr. Owen, the learned Author of the British Dictionary, are inserted in the Appendix.

The animal and vegetable productions are similar to those in the hilly counties of England; and the only fish, not common in the English rivers, are the skerling, and the sewin, which principally abounds in the Ebwy. The mountainous districts

* Number of Men in the county of Monmouth, May. 1798:

		Brought forward	7,426
Abergavenny, two divisions - -	2,834	Caldecot, serving at Chepstow - -	119
Scenfreth - - - - -	1,589	Uik - - - - -	1,456
Raglan - - - - -	1,466	Wentloog (supposed) - - - -	2,834*
Caldecot - - - - -	1,537		
	<u>7,426</u>		<u>4,409</u>
		Total	<u>11,835</u>

districts are rich in mineral productions, particularly iron and coal, which have given rise to numerous iron manufactories *, and considerably increased the population and riches of the county.

At the time of the Roman invasion Monmouthshire was part of the territory inhabited by the Silures, which, besides this district, comprehended the counties of Glamorgan, Brecknock, Radnor, Hereford, and such parts of Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, and Caermarthenshire as lay between the Severn, the Teme, and the Towy. Caerwent, which afterwards became a Roman station under the name of Venta Silurum, was their capital; and their other principal towns were Magna (Kenchester) Gobannium (Abergavenny) Ariconium (Rose or Berry hill near Rose) and Ifca (Caerleon.) This warlike people had conquered, or were in alliance with two other tribes, the Ordovices and the Dimetæ.

The Ordovices possessed all North Wales, except a small district of Flintshire, which belonged to the Carnabii, and some parts of Shropshire.

The Dimetæ dwelt in the counties of South Wales, which were not possessed by the Silures, as Cardiganshire, Pembrokehire, and Caermarthenshire; their boundaries were on the side of the land, the Towy which separated them from the Silures, and the Dovy from the Ordovices.

The

* A list of the principal manufactories in Monmouthshire :

Sorwy	- - -	Pitcoal—furnace	- - - - -	Messrs. Monkhousfe and Co.
Ebwy	- - -	Pitcoal—furnace	- - - - -	Harford, Partridge, and Co.
Nant y glo	- - -	Pitcoal—two furnaces	- - - - -	Hill, Harford, and Co.
Blaenavon	- - -	Pitcoal—three furnaces	- - - - -	J. Hill and Co.
Abercarn	- - -	{ Pitcoal forge, and charcoal wire-work : a charcoal furnace not used		S. Glover, esq.
Machen	- - -	Charcoal forge	- - - - -	Messrs. Harford, Partridge, and Co.
Gelliwaftad	- - -	Charcoal forge	- - - - -	
Baffaleg	- - -	Charcoal forge in Tredegar Park	- - - - -	J. Blanning, esq.
Caerleon	- - -	Charcoal forge; formerly belonging to	- - - - -	C. Leigh, esq.
Pont y Pool	- - -	Charcoal furnace and forges	- - - - -	Two pitcoal furnaces } formerly belonging to
Lanfilio on the Monnow	- - -	Charcoal forge	- - - - -	
Troftrey	- - -	Charcoal forges	- - - - -	Harvey, Wafon, and Co.
Monmouth	- - -	Charcoal forges	- - - - -	Messrs. Harford, Partridge, and Co.
Tintern Abbey	- - -	Charcoal furnace, forges, and wire-works	- - - - -	Mr. Thompson.

Besides these Iron works, there are also at

Rogeston	- - -	Tin mills	- - - - -	} - - - J. Butler, esq.
Caerleon	- - -	Large tin work	- - - - -	

The whole region inhabited by these three tribes, including Mona, or the Isle of Anglesey, was denominated by the Romans *Britannia Secunda*, to distinguish it from the southern parts of England, which were called *Britannia Prima*.

Having brought the natives of *Britannia Prima* under subjection, the Romans turned their arms against the Silures; but experienced great difficulties in the conquest of a country intersected by numerous and rapid rivers, broken by mountains, covered with forests, and defended by a warlike people, who made an unparalleled resistance to the Roman arms, and were not brought into subjection until the reign of Vespasian, when they were conquered by Julius Frontinus.

Agricola succeeded Frontinus in the government of Britain. On his arrival in the country of the Silures he found the people entirely subdued, and, though the summer was past, instantly collected the troops, and marched against the Ordovices, who had recently cut off a squadron of Roman horse stationed on their frontiers. Having finally subdued, or in the language of Tacitus, exterminated almost the whole nation, he advanced to the conquest of Anglesey, where the Britons had retired as to a place of security.

The Romans occupied the country of the Silures as a conquered province from the time of their first establishment in the reign of Vespasian, to their final evacuation of Britain, in the year of Christ 408, a period of 330 years.

From their departure the history of Britain is uncertain, obscure, and fabulous. The country was divided into petty sovereignties, occasionally at variance with each other, or over-run by the northern tribes. Many of the natives, particularly of the southern and western parts, frequently repaired to Armorica or Brittany, the inhabitants of which spoke a similar language, and were supposed to be descended from the same ancestors.

The Britons being attacked by numerous hordes of Picts and Scots, and long accustomed to rely on external aid, acted at first with weakness and trepidation, and were discomfited on all sides. Despair at length called forth their native energy; they rallied, and collecting a formidable body, drove the enemy beyond the frontiers. In this struggle they seem to have received troops and sovereign from Armorica.

Oldrean

Oldrean duke of Armorica, the fourth in descent from Conan, who received that kingdom from the emperor Maximus, (A. D. 385,) being applied to for assistance, sent his brother Constantine with a considerable force. Having defeated the invaders, Constantine was raised to the crown by the gratitude of the natives, (A. D. 433) and from him descended a race of Armorican kings highly renowned in British story.

It is asserted that Constans, the son and successor of Constantine, after a short reign, either died or was murdered by Vortigern *, a powerful prince in Britain, who seized the crown, and that Aurelius Ambrosius and Uther Pendragon, the infant sons of Constantine, were conveyed to Armorica. Others suppose, that on the retreat of the Romans the Armorican princes were sovereigns of the Damnonii, or Cornwall and Devonshire, and subordinate to Vortigern, hereditary king of the Dimetæ, who either by election, intrigue, or force, became head or sovereign of all the British tribes, from the channel to the Roman wall.

With a view to protect his dominions from the Picts and Scots, Vortigern, by the advice of the British chiefs, invited a corps of Anglo-Saxon mercenaries, under the celebrated Hengist; and having, with their assistance, driven back the northern invaders, gave a settlement in the Isle of Thanet to his new allies. But the Saxons, joined by numerous bodies from the northern shores of Germany and Jutland, and forming an alliance with the Scots and Picts, soon turned their arms against the Britons, and suddenly invaded their country in different quarters. The Britons, though at first confounded, recovered from their despondency; they defended themselves with great bravery; the Saxons met with alternate defeats and successes, and did not finally establish themselves in the center of the kingdom without extreme difficulty †.

As Vortigern was the unfortunate cause of this Saxon invasion, his character has been branded by the British writers, and all the miseries of his unhappy country

* The real situation of Vortigern is not ascertained; some call him sovereign of the Silures, or Gwent; some king of the Dimetæ; some the king of the Damnonii, or Cornwall; and others consul, or earl of the Gewisses.

† Mr. Whitaker has plainly proved, in opposition

to the assertions of Gildas, which are adopted by Hume and others, that the Britons did not act with pusillanimity, but defended themselves with great spirit and vigour. History of Manchester, b. ii. chap. 1. To which account I am indebted for many judicious observations.

country imputed to him alone; while his son Vortimer, and Aurelius Ambrosius, who combated the Saxons with equal spirit and intrepidity, are extolled in the rhapsodies of the bards, which seem to form the principal foundation of the history of these times.

On the death or abdication* of Vortigern, Aurelius Ambrosius is said to have become king of the British tribes, and to have resisted or attacked the Saxons in every quarter of the kingdom. All that is known of this great fore-runner of Arthur is, that he was of Roman extraction; that his parents, who had assumed the purple, were killed at the commencement of the Saxon invasion †; but whether he came from Armorica, was hereditary king of the Damnonii, or received that kingdom as the gift of Vortigern, is as uncertain as his lineage or the time of his birth. The extent and events of his reign have been differently represented: numerous victories over the Saxons have been by some attributed to his prowess and judgment, while by others eleven battles, of which the names are mentioned by Nennius, have been ascribed to Arthur, whose controverted history it is equally difficult to elucidate or explain.

In the legends of this uncertain period, Gwent or Monmouthshire is often a conspicuous scene; its sovereigns, Uther Pendragon and the renowned Arthur, are represented as equal in fame and exploits to the greatest heroes of Greece and Italy; and Caerleon is supposed to rival the splendor of ancient Rome ‡.

To repeat the fabulous stories of Geoffrey of Monmouth would be to insult the reader's understanding; and the traditional songs of the bards are too uncertain and unconnected to form the basis of genuine history. Should, however, the astonishing exploits and unparalleled victories of Arthur be admitted as facts, they only contributed to retard, not to suppress the growing power of the Saxons, who rapidly extended their conquests over that part of Britain now called England, and formed seven kingdoms, which were finally consolidated by Egbert into one great monarchy, (827.)

In

* According to some, Vortigern was besieged by Aurelius and the Britons, and burnt with the tower which he was defending against them; according to others, he resigned the crown of Britain in favour of Aurelius, and retired to the mountains of Wales,

where he became a hermit. See Nennius, and Pen-nant's interesting account of the place of his supposed retreat; *Tour in Wales*, vol. 2. p. 213.

† Gildas.

‡ See p. 295.

In these conflicts, some of the Britons fled into Cornwall and Armorica; but greater numbers, who escaped from the sword of the enemy, retired indignantly to the mountains of Wales, and joined the natives in their struggle for liberty.

During the gradual establishment of the heptarchy, the Saxons and Welsh princes were in a state of almost uninterrupted warfare: the Saxons confined them within narrower limits, and after reducing them to the present boundaries of Wales and Monmouthshire, compelled them to become tributary.

It is difficult to ascertain the exact limits of the principalities into which Wales was divided during this period, as their number and names were continually changing by the fortune of war, and the prejudicial custom of partitioning the dominions among all the sons of the deceased prince. But the most certain and permanent division was, 1. Gwynedd, or the greater part of North Wales; 2. Deheubarth, or the greater part of South Wales; 3. Powisland.*

These three principalities were united in the person of Roderic the Great, and on his death (876) divided between his three sons: Anarawd possessed Gwynedd; Cadelh, Deheubarth; and Merfyn, Powisland; Roderic also ordained by his will, "that his eldest son Anarawd and his successors, *should continue the payment of the ancient tribute to the crown of England*; and that the other two, their heirs and successors, should acknowledge his sovereignty †."

It is still more difficult to trace in those obscure times the history of Monmouthshire, which was included in Deheubarth, sometimes forming a separate district under the name of Gwent, and at others comprehended in Morganoc, or the kingdom of Glamorgan, and divided into the hundreds of Gwentloog, and Edlogan, Gwent-under-wood, and Gwent-over-wood ‡. The succession of its petty princes forms in the Welsh chronicles a mere catalogue of names, supposed to be a list of kings from Morgan the son of Arthur, to the final extinction of the line in the days of Henry the second §.

At

* For an accurate account of the boundaries of Powisland, see Pennant's Wales, vol. 1. p. 212.

† Caradoc's History of Wales, translated by Powell, p. 35.

‡ See a curious paper in the Appendix, No. 2,

which gives the divisions of Morganoc, and proves the influence of the Saxon kings in this part of Wales.

§ Meirich the son of Ithel, king or prince of Gwent, died without issue male, leaving one daughter Morvyth.

At an early period Monmouthshire was divided among several petty princes, usually tributary to the kings of Glamorgan, or to the princes of South Wales, in whose territories Glamorgan was comprised. But they withheld their tribute whenever those princes were not in a situation to enforce obedience. Sometimes they aimed at independence, and one savage instance of their attempts is recorded in the history of Wales: in 983, an insurrection took place among the natives of Gwent; and Einion, deputed by his father Owen, prince of South Wales, to persuade them to obedience, was massacred by the enraged multitude*.

It appears, however, that the warlike inhabitants of Gwent not only withdrew their allegiance from the princes of South Wales, but even occasionally ventured to resist the sovereigns of England. Alfred made preparations to subdue Caerleon†; and Canute in 1034, entered‡ the land of Gwent with a powerful army, and defeated Rytherch ap Jestin, prince of South Wales.

Some authors of credit are of opinion that Monmouthshire, though late, was wholly conquered by the Saxons. The Saxon Chronicle in several instances seems to confirm this notion, by asserting that the kings of England subdued *all* Wales, took hostages, and compelled the natives to pay tribute. But these conquests were only temporary inroads, until the reign of Edward the Confessor, when Harold penetrated into the country at the head of a numerous army, defeated Griffith sovereign of North Wales, gave a prince to South Wales, forced the natives to swear fealty, give hostages, and pay the customary

vyth, who espoused Grono, great grandson to Rees ap Theodore, prince of South Wales, and lineal ancestor of sir Owen Tudor, grandfather of Henry the seventh. "So that it appears, that the kings of Scotland and England are originally descended from Morvyth, this Gwentonian prince's daughter, and heir to Meyrick last king of Gwent, who, according to several authentic British pedigrees, was lineally descended from Cadwalladar, the last king of Britain, and as our historians do testify, did prognosticate 1500 years past, that the heirs descended of his loins,

should be restored again to the kingdom of Britain, which was partly accomplished in king Henry vii. and more by the accession of James i. to the British throne, but wholly fulfilled in the happy Union of all Britain, by the glorious queen ANNE; whom God long preserve of his great goodness, and the succession in the protestant line." Secret Memoirs of Monmouthshire, p. 57.

* Powell, p. 62.

† Ibid. p. 57. See p. 97. of this Work.

‡ Ibid. p. 83.

tomary tribute to the crown of England*; Harold conceived the conquest to be so secure, that he built a palace at Portfswit †.

At this period the Saxons seem to have occupied Monmouth, Chepstow, Caerwent, and Caerleon, and had their empire continued, all Monmouthshire would have been speedily added to their dominions. A temporary respite however was afforded by the Norman invasion, and William was too much occupied with the Anglo-Saxons to form any settled plan for subduing Wales. But the Norman nobles retained those places which the Saxons had conquered, and either built or strengthened many castles near the frontiers of Monmouthshire. Issuing from these fortresses they gradually occupied the whole county, which was not finally subdued until the reign of Henry the second ‡, when the line of the petty kings or princes of Gwent was supposed to become extinct.

The invasion of the Normans was wholly different from that of the Saxons: the conquests of the Saxons being made in the name and with the troops of the sovereign, were annexed to the possessions, and subjected to the jurisdiction of the crown; but the Norman kings, engaged in foreign affairs, and employed in quelling insurrections, were unable to extend their arms into Wales; the great barons therefore were invited to make incursions at their own expence, and with their

* The native writers of Monmouthshire boast, that their country was only subjected to the Roman yoke, but neither conquered by the Saxons, Danes, or early Normans; the author of the Secret Memoirs supports this in some indifferent verses, which prove his patriotism rather than his taste:

"To thee, brave Gwent! praise doth alone belong,
"Thou ne'er wor'st chains, impatient w'er't of wrong:
"When Saxons, Danes, and Normans Britain sway'd,
"Thou scorn'dst the servile yoke on others laid;
"With courage great most bravely didst maintain
"Thy rights, so long enjoy'd; may they remain*, &c.

† See p. 17.

‡ The author of the Secret Memoirs of Monmouthshire gives a curious account of their submission. "But we find not that the Gwentonians were totally subdued, but rather capitulated in the time of king Henry ii, who coming thro' that country with his army for Ireland, passed over a brook called Nant-

pen-Carne, held fatal by the inhabitants of that country, who were over-credulous of a prophecy of Merlin Silvester, the British Apollo, who had prognosticated, that when a stout and freckled-fac'd king (such as king Henry was) should pass over that brook, that the power of the Britons in those parts should be brought under; whereby their courage was abated, and that country brought soon into subjection to that king and his successors."

It is most probable that the ford called Nant-pen-Carne, was Nant Bengam, or the river Rumney near the bridge, and not far from a farm-house now called Bengam. It could not be on the western side of the Rumney, because Giraldus says it was situated in "Novi Burgi finibus, or within the limits of Newport lordship," and Leland observes, that the "Lordship of Newport be likelyhood should stretch to the river of Remny, limes Morganiax."

Leland's Itin. vol. 5. fol. 6.

* P. 57.

their own retainers; were rewarded with the lands gained from the Welsh, and created peers, by the title of lords barons, in the places which they over-ran.

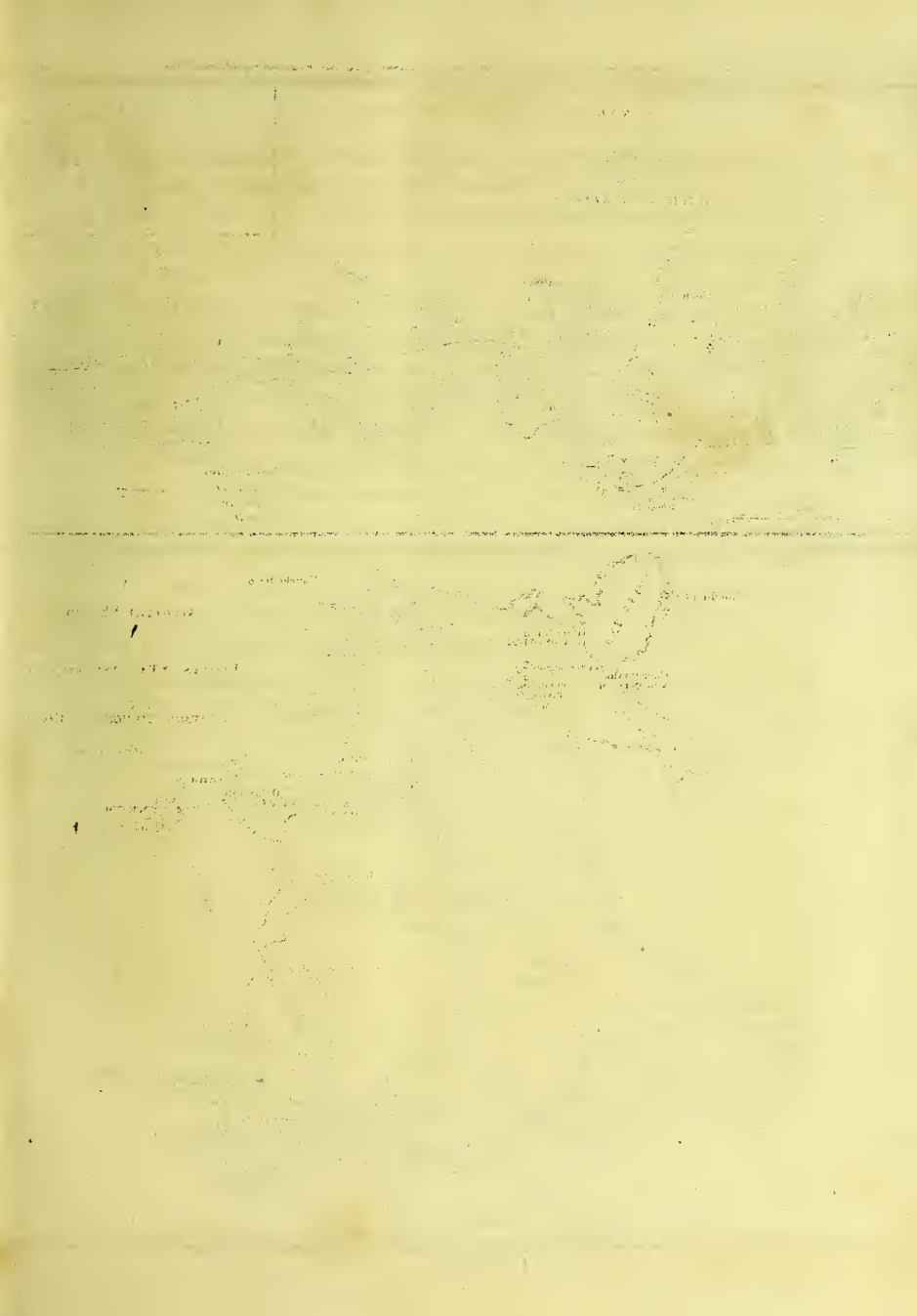
They held these lands from the crown as feudal tenures, built castles for themselves, and towns for their followers; became despots in their respective demesnes, awed the crown, when worn by weak princes, and arrogated to themselves an almost independent sovereignty. Hence arose the numerous castles and lordships with which Wales abounded: Pennant asserts that there were no less than 143^{*}; of this number Monmouthshire alone contained at least twenty-five, the sites of which may still be traced †. “These lands,” says Enderbie, “being holden per baroniam, with full power to administer justice unto their tenants, were invested with divers privileges, franchises, and immunities, so that the writs of ordinary justices out of the king’s courts were not current among them. But in case of strife between two barons marchers concerning their territories or confines, for want of a superior, they had recourse to the king, their supreme lord, and justice was administered to them in the superior courts of the realm.”

Such was the wretched state of feudal jurisprudence in Monmouthshire, as well as in the other marches of Wales, till Henry the eighth abolished the government of the lords’ marchers, divided Wales into twelve shires, and included Monmouthshire among the counties of England; a happy change from the oppression of feudal tyranny, to the just and equal administration of English laws!

* Tour in Wales, vol. 2. p. 452.

† The great number of castles in Monmouthshire, must be attributed to its position as a barrier betwixt the English and Welsh. A regular chain of fortresses seems to have been first formed or occupied by the Normans on the banks of the Monnow, the Wy, and the Severn; these are Scenfreth, Grosmont, Monmouth, Trelech, perhaps Tintern, Chepstow, and Caldecot. A second line stretches diagonally from Grosmont to the banks of the Rumney, which indicates their gradual progress; these are White Castle, Tregar, Usk, Langibby, Caerleon, and Newport.

As I have already observed, p. 208, this diagonal line, with the castle of Abergavenny, was probably intended to curb the mountaineers, who made perpetual incursions on their invaders. In addition to these strong fortresses, several smaller castles, or rather castellated mansions, were constructed for the purpose of keeping the natives in awe; these are scattered in various parts of the county, such as Raglan, which at first was only an Agrarian fortress, Striguil, Dinham, Lanvair, Lanvaches, Penhow, Pencoeed, Bishton, Wilcric, Greenfield, Rogeston, and Castleton.



A hand-drawn sketch map of the Bagpath area. The map shows a river or stream flowing from the top left towards the bottom right. On the left bank, there are two points of origin: 'from Bush' and 'from Cirencester', both with arrows pointing towards a central junction point labeled 'to Junction'. To the right of the river, there is a label 'Tadworth village'. Further right, a horizontal line represents the 'Roman Road'. Above the Roman Road, there is a label 'M.F. Estuary' with a small square symbol. Below the Roman Road, there is a label 'Bagpath' with a small square symbol. To the right of the Bagpath, there is a label 'for Kibbles' with an arrow pointing away from the road. A small cross marks a location near 'Nonsuch'.



General Sketch of the
ROMAN STATIONS in
MONMOUTHSHIRE and
the adjacent Counties

Map showing Roman stations and roads in Monmouthshire and the adjacent counties of Herefordshire and Gloucestershire. Key locations include Bath (Aquae Sulis), Eborac (Bath), and various Roman roads like the Fosse Way and the Roman Watling Street. The map also shows the River Severn and the River Avon.

Explanation

<i>Via Julia</i>	<i>Red</i>
<i>Akeman Street</i>	<i>Blue</i>
<i>Foss</i>	<i>Green</i>

SECTION 2.

Roman Stations and Roads in Monmouthshire.—Course of the Julia Strata from Bath to the Confines of Glamorganshire.

THE Romans having possessed the country of the Silures as a conquered province during three hundred years, built several towns, and formed many forts and encampments, for the purpose of keeping the natives, who were a war-like race, in subjection. Several of the stations were placed in that part of the province now called Monmouthshire, and are mentioned in the Itineraries of Antonine and Richard of Cirencester.

The stations acknowledged to be Roman, by the concurrent testimony of commentators and antiquaries are *Ifca Silurum* (Caerleon) *Venta Silurum* (Caerwent) and *Gobannium* (Abergavenny). Two other stations, *Burrium* and *Blestium*, which are mentioned in the Itinerary, are also better fixed by Horsley at Usk and Monmouth, than by others at Old Castle or Longtown, and Caerphilly.

Burrium* is mentioned in the twelfth and thirteenth Iters of Antonine, and in the thirteenth and fourteenth of Richard, as the first station from Ifca Silurum towards Uriconium and Glevum, which are admitted to be Wroxeter and Gloucester. The line of the Itinerary from Ifca passed the stations of Burrium, M. P. viiii, Gobannium xii, Magna xxii, and Bravinium or Branogenium xxiii, to Uriconium † xxvii, making a distance, according to Antonine, of 93 miles

* It is called by Richard, in the 13th Iter, *Bultrum*; and in the 14th *Ballium*.

† In the different editions of Antonine, this Roman town is called *Uriconium*, *Viroonium*, and *Virocomium*; by Richard, *Uriconium*, *Virioonium*,

and *Viriconium*, and by Ptolemy *Viroonium*, but its general appellation is *Uriconium*.

Mr. Shaw, in his history of Staffordshire, Introduction, p. 28, having denied that Wroxeter is the site of *Uriconium*, in opposition to the general opinion of

93 * miles, which agrees with the present distance nearly in a straight direction between Caerleon and Wroxeter. Burrium, therefore, must have been placed in some part of this line at the distance of about eight or nine Roman miles from Caerleon, a position which exactly corresponds with the situation of *Ulk*; its distance also from Abergavenny equally agrees with the distance of Burrium from Gobannium.

This point being once admitted, it follows, unquestionably, that *Blestium* cannot be Old Castle or Longtown, but must be Monmouth; because the distance from *Ulk* coincides with the distance from *Burrium* to *Blestium*, as well as the distance of *Blestium* from Glevum or Gloucester, by Ariconium, Rose or Berry hill, the station near Ross. This system is perfectly simple, and agrees with the Itineraries of Antonine and Richard, while no other can be adopted which is not attended with insuperable difficulties †.

Although the positions of the stations in Monmouthshire are ascertained, yet much difficulty occurs in fixing the Roman roads which connected them, and communicated with the stations in the neighbouring counties, particularly as most of the great roads leading from the Roman provinces east of the Severn to the southern part of Britannia Secunda, or South Wales, must have united in, or passed through Monmouthshire. This difficulty has principally arisen from the general bogginess of the soil, in which the roads may have sunk or been covered;

of our best antiquaries, I shall give the principal proofs on which that opinion is justly founded, lest his respectable authority should mislead the reader.

1. Wroxeter is unanimously allowed to have been the site of a Roman station; vestiges of the Roman wall's still remain, and the form of the fortrefs was actually traced by Horsley; baths, tessellated pavements, coins, and other Roman antiquities have been there discovered in great quantities.

2. *Urioconium*, or *Viroconium*, is placed by Ptolemy in the country of the *Carnabii*, on the banks of the Severn, near the boundaries of the *Ordovices*, and north of the country of the *Silures*; a situation which exactly corresponds with that of Wroxeter.

3. In the second *Iter* of Richard, *Urioconium* (*Viroconium*) is placed on the Watling street, in the line of the road leading from *Rutupis* or Richborough in Kent, through London to *Segontium*, or *Caer Segont* in North Wales. The bishop of Cloyne and Mr.

Leman traced the Watling street from Richborough to Wroxeter, found every part of it still distinguished by that peculiar name, and the position of Wroxeter, on the Watling street, according with that of *Urioconium*, in the *Itinerary*.

4. The situation of *Urioconium* being thus ascertained, general Roy has unquestionably proved that the twelfth *Iter* of Antonine from *Ipsa*, (*Caerleon*) to *Urioconium*, (*Wroxeter*) could take no other direction than through *Ulk* and Abergavenny. See Camden, Horsley, Mason, Stukeley, Gale, Roy's *Military Antiquities*, p. 171; and Reynolds's *Iter Britanniarum*, p. 206.

* According to Richard 94.

† See table of the *Iters*, from the different copies of the *Itinerary*, p. 15, 17, and 22, of this chapter, and the annexed map of the Roman roads and stations.

covered; from the frequent inundations, which have swept away all traces of human art; from the cultivated state of those parts of the country in which the stations were situated; and from the custom of pitching the roads and pathways, and of planting the hedge-rows on broad and high embankments, the foundations of which are generally formed with large stones. These local disadvantages, added to the remoteness of the county, and the bad state of the roads before the formation of turnpikes, impeded the researches of antiquaries, and scarcely any traces of Roman roads have been discovered, except the causeway leading from Crick village through Caerwent to Caerleon. After all the researches of the learned on this subject, much remains to be ascertained, and the field of conjecture is still open.

It is generally acknowledged that the Julia Strata led from Bath, through the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan, to Caermarthen and St. David's. The clearest method of attempting to ascertain its route through Monmouthshire, will be to compare the eleventh Iter of Richard's Itinerary, which describes the whole course, with those parts of the twelfth and fourteenth Iters of Antonine, in which most of the same stations are mentioned.

These Iters trace the Julia Strata from Bath across the Severn through Caerwent and Caerleon, to the first station in Glamorganshire; it is therefore necessary to fix its route towards the Severn, and ascertain the point of embarkation, which has been placed by different writers at Porthead, Aunsbury, Henbury, New Passage, Aust, and Oldbury. Hence the landing place on the opposite shore has been rendered equally doubtful, and assigned to Tydenham, Chepstow, Beachley, Black Rock, and Sudbrook or Portscwit. By the kind assistance of my friend the Reverend Thomas Leman, whose knowledge of Roman antiquities is unquestionable, and who has attentively examined the country, I am enabled to delineate the course of that part of the Julia Strata, or Via Julia, which passed from Bath to the Severn.

"The Via Julia ran from Bath, by a small lane called Weston lane, leaving the church of Weston to the north, and instead of turning up with the present road at the end of the village towards Lansdown, continued straight through the valley, now an obscure track, till it joined the present horse-road to North Stoke.

It

It ascended the hill, leaving Kelweston beacon on the left, and passing under the strong British post on North Stoke brow, entered the village of North Stoke by the name of the Fofs road *; but keeping on the edge of the hill, and leaving the village to the right, descended with a sweep to the present upper turnpike road, which it joined about a quarter of a mile before it reached Bitton, where, near the confluence of the Boyd with the Avon, was the station of Trajæctus †.

“ From Bitton it continued with the present upper Bristol turnpike as far as the new church of St. George near Bristol, from thence crossed the flat ground, leaving the new church of St. Paul about a furlong to the left, and joined the road to Redlands, about a furlong from Stoke Croft turnpike. After passing Redland Court, it went straight forward, nearly in the track of a small road, which still partly exists, leaving the present great road to the right, and ascending Durdham Down, at the back of Mr. Daubeney’s house, came on the hill near the lime kiln house ‡. The Roman street now crossing the road from Clifton to Redland, near the *tree on which is placed a direction post*, is tolerably conspicuous until it falls into the turnpike from Shirehampton, which it crosses also at the very spot where it is joined by the road from the Wells. From this place *it is still highly raised and visible* over the remainder of Durdham Down, and running between Durdham Lodge and stable, crosses a field or two, leaving another house, called Pigeon Pie, a few yards to the left, continues under the wall of Snead park, mounts the hill, and gently descending enters the great station of Sea Mills, or Abone.”

“ From Abone, paved remains of the road still exist, as it passes a farm house of lord de Clifford’s. It then runs through some inclosures, enters the Shirehampton turnpike, near the end of lord de Clifford’s grounds; and continuing between the inn on King’s Weston Hill, and lord de Clifford’s house, descends between the mansion and the stables, and passes straight by Madam Farm §, till it

* When a small road approached a greater, it often assumed the name of the greater, though passing in an opposite direction to its general course.

† Called by Richard, Abone.

‡ See the sketch of this track on the plate annexed to this chapter.

§ It is a curious circumstance, that the drain called “*Whore’s Wall*,” and the little stream which runs near

our Roman road, form the boundaries of an insulated part of the hundred of Berkley: the name given to the drain was probably a corruption of “*Hæduorum Vallum*,” and was originally the communication by water from the Severn to the great fortified post on King’s Weston Hill; in the extreme corner of which was afterwards placed the Roman exploratory camp, marked A.

it joins the banks of the Severn. From hence was the passage into Wales, and part of the road, from the opposite side of the river to Caerwent (the Venta Silurum) existed still paved only a few years ago."

"To explain the reason for placing Trajectus, Abone, and ad Sabrinam, at Bitton, Sea Mills, and the Severn side, I must refer the reader to the respective Itineraries of Antonine and Richard, and shall attempt to reconcile their apparent agreement."

Antonini Iter xiv inversum.		Ricardi Iter xi.	
Ab Aquis Solis.		Ab Aquis per Viam Juliam, Menapiam usque, sic	
Trajectus - - - - -	VI.	Ad Abonam - - - - -	M. P. VI.
		Ad Sabrinam - - - - -	VI.
Abone - - - - -	VIII.	Unde Trajectu intras in Britanniam Secun-	
		dam et Stationem, Trajectum - M. P.	III.
Venta Silurum - - - - -	VIII.	Venta Silurum - - - - -	VIII.
Ifca - - - - -	VIII.	Ifca Colonia - - - - -	VIII.
	XXXIII		XXXII.

"The names of the places may have been transposed, the numerals being written in Roman capitals may have been changed; yet as both these authors agree in fixing the same route between the two stations of Aquæ Solis and Ifca (which are undoubtedly Bath and Caerleon) with only the trifling difference of one mile, such a strong coincidence of circumstances, should have prevented the numerous errors of commentators; particularly as traces of the Roman road still exist between them, and the distance from Bath to Caerleon nearly corresponds with the numbers of the Itineraries."

"As both Antonine and Richard agree in affixing VI to the first station, there is no reason to infer (as some writers have done) that VI is a corruption of XI, unless no vestiges of a station could be discovered at the distance of six miles. But at Bitton, exactly six miles from Bath, there are evident traces of a Roman camp, accompanied with a tumulus (the constant attendant on Roman roads and stations) and placed near the confluence of two rivers, the Boyd and the Avon; a position commonly chosen by the Romans."

"As Antonine is generally more correct than Richard, I have no scruple to adopt his name of * Trajectus, in preference to that of Abone; but the name

is

* "It being in fact the station from whence the passage over the mountains (which separated it from Bath) began."

is of little consequence, provided the position of the station itself be ascertained."

" From Trajectus the Roman road undoubtedly continues in the track of the present turnpike, as far as St. George's church, near Bristol, and from thence to the great port of Sea Mills or Abone *. That this was no inconsiderable station, the foundations, coins, and remains, daily found, plainly prove: that it was the great port of the Roman navy I have no doubt; it stands at the confluence of the river Trim with the Avon, and was a place peculiarly well situated for the magazine of their naval stores, as well as the shelter of their fleet on this side of England. The road leading to and from it is visible; exploratory camps are placed on each side; and one on King's Weston Hill corresponding not only with that on Lanfdown, but with one near the Cross Hands, easily maintained the communication with the great station of Caerwent. The distance of VIII miles in the Itinerary of Antonine, between Abone and Trajectus, exactly agrees with the distance from Bitton to Sea Mills; and as it was the great station on the Avon, it probably derived the name of Abone, from its position on that river."

" From this station Venta Silurum is placed by Antonine at the distance of nine miles; whereas the direct distance from Sea Mills to Caerwent is not less than twelve: but as the sum total prefixed to this Iter does not correspond with the amount of the respective numbers, by a deficiency of five miles, it may be concluded either that some of the numerals were corrupted, or a post omitted by the inattention of transcribers; accordingly, in referring to Richard, we find † the station of ad Sabrinam III, not mentioned by Antonine, a distance which exactly accords with that from Sea Mills to the Severn, and along the line of which traces of a Roman causeway are still manifest. By adding these three miles, the distance from Sea Mills to Caerwent will be twelve, and from ad Sabrinam (or the place of embarkation on the Severn) nine, which, allowing about six and a half for the passage, is the distance from Caerwent."

" I presume

* See the sketch.

† In confirmation of their having some post or station on the borders of the Severn, Mr. Barret, in his History of Bristol, p. 12. mentions, " that under Kinsweston Hill, in Lawrence Weston, near the river, was a common field, called Abone

" Town, as mentioned in the rental of Sir Ralph Sadlier, 36 Hen. 8; where many Roman coins have been discovered." This was probably a hamlet belonging to the great station at Sea Mills, and attached to the post of Ad Sabrinam.

"I presume therefore to offer the following corrections of Antonine and Richard:"

Iter 14 Antonini inverfum.		Iter 11 Ricardi.	
Ab Ifca Callevam ufq. ciii		Ab Aquis, per Viam Juliam, Menapiam	
Aquæ Solis (Bath)		ufq. fic.	
Trajectus: (Bitton) - - - - - vi.		Ad Trajectum (Abonam) - - - - - vi.	
Abone: (Sea Mills) - - - - - viii.		Ad Abonam (Trajectum) - - - - - viii.	
Ad Sabrinam, (omitted) - - - - - iii.		Ad Sabrinam - - - - - iii.	
		Unde Trajectu intras in Britanniam Secun-	
		dam.	
Venta Silurum (Caerwent) - - - - - viii.		Venta Silurum - - - - - viii.	
Ifca Silurum (Caerleon) &c. - - - - - viii.		Ifca Colonia - - - - - viii.	
	xxxvi.		xxxv.

The point of embarkation being thus settled, the next object is to trace the Julia Strata, from the place of disembarkation on the opposite coast of Monmouthshire, to Caerwent. From local observations, it appears, that in the whole tract between the mouth of the Wy and Caldecot Level, there could have been no secure landing place, excepting at the New Passage and at Caldecot Pill, or perhaps at Portswit, if we admit the conjecture, that it was once a port*. I am inclined therefore to adopt the opinion of my friend Mr. Leman in favour of Caldecot Pill. Notwithstanding, however, all my researches and enquiries, I could not discover any vestiges of a causeway between Caldecot Pill and Caerwent, till I passed the brook Nedern, in the vicinity of Caerwent†.

Between the brook and the eastern gate, I perceived vestiges of an ancient paved causeway, which within the memory of some of the inhabitants was more perfect. I was likewise informed by the man employed in making the present road, that this causeway was the common way for horse and foot passengers, and notwithstanding the boggy nature of the adjacent soil, was remarkable for its firmness and dryness.

I have

* Portswit is called in the Triades, one of the three passages or ferries in the Isle of Britain. From Mr. Owen.

† If I might venture to hazard an opinion on so difficult a subject, I should conjecture that, from Caldecot Pill, the Julia Strata took the direction of what is now a broad way to a place called the Tump, a natural elevation of rock, which may have served as a tumulus. Its course is lost in the village of Caldecot, but re-appears a little beyond the church, opposite to the ruins of the castle, which might have been the site of a Roman post, and is the bye road leading to Caerwent; it runs over the natural rock, in a straight line for above a mile, when it is inter-

rupted by several lime kilns; from which place to the brook Nedern no farther traces of it could be discovered. On the other side of that brook is the causeway mentioned in the text. My friend Mr. Evans, at my request, explored the country between Caerwent and the Severn, corroborated Mr. Leman's opinion, that Caldecot Pill was the landing place of the Romans, and confirmed my conjecture that the Julia Strata ran from thence through the present village of Caldecot to the west of the castle, in the direction of the bye road which I have described; he particularly noticed that the track was worn by constant use several feet below the surface.

I have observed *, that the only part of the Julia Strata visible in Monmouthshire, which has been distinctly ascertained, runs through Caerwent, and from thence over the brook Nedern, by Penhow, towards Caerleon. Several antiquaries, and particularly Horsley, who travelled over it towards the beginning of this century, describe it as large and remarkable. Since the formation of the turnpike, its appearance is considerably changed; but the vestiges are still occasionally manifest, as far as Cat's ash, a public house on the left of the high road, two miles from Caerleon. Near this place the turnpike quits it at the bottom of a steep ascent, and in a mile again joins it; but the Roman way soon branches off in a straight direction across the fields, and in the line of the old Chepstow Hill road, to the village of Caerleon, or Ultra Pontem, from whence a branch led towards Usk.

The course of the Julia Strata, west from Caerleon, through the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan, is contained in the twelfth Iter of Antonine, and the two next stations beyond Caerleon are Bovium † xxvii, and Nidus xv ‡.

Richard places Bovium at the distance of xxviii. m. p.; but mentions an intermediate post, Tibia Amnis viii.; which is omitted by Antonine. Should this numeral viii not be corrupted, the site of Tibia Amnis must be found in Monmouthshire. The name implies that it was seated on a river; but I could not discover the traces of any station answering to that distance and position between Caerleon and the frontiers; and the best antiquaries are of opinion, that the numerals are corrupted, and that Tibia Amnis was a post on the banks of the Taaf.

From Caerleon to Tibia Amnis the Julia Strata proceeded through or near
Newport;

* See p. 29.

† Bovium or Bonium has been placed by different antiquaries at Cowbridge, Boverton, Lantwit Major, and Ewenny; Nidus is generally allowed to be Neath. Horsley erroneously places Nidus and Bonium, which he transposes, near Portbury and near Axbridge in Somersetshire, which is contrary to the direction of the Iter. As he had never seen the Iters of Richard (which positively fix the situation of the stations mentioned in the latter part of the twelfth Iter of Antonine) he had not the least suspicion that the twelfth Iter of Antonine, through the blunders of transcribers, was composed of two separate Iters joined together.

Knowing therefore the position of the stations mentioned in the beginning of the Iter, he concluded that the stations at the end were a continuation of the same journey; whereas one of the Iters runs through the west of England, and the other through the southern part of Wales. Horsley's Commentary, p. 457. Reynolds's Iter Britanniarum, p. 333.

‡ See Sureta's Itinerarium Antonini, p. 110. In Horsley's copy, Nidus is put first and Bovium second, and the distances are xv. and xv. But the coincidence of the distance from Ica to Bovium xxvii. with xxviii. in Richard, and the order of the stations, prove Sureta's reading to be right.

Newport; for Alexander Necham, who died in 1217, abbot of Cirencester, speaking of Newport, observed, that it passed not far from the mouth of the Usk:

“ Intrat et auget aquas Sabrinæ fluminis Ofca

“ Præceps; testis erit Julia Strata mihi.”

No vestiges, however, of a Roman causeway are visible between Caerleon and Newport; but, according to the opinion of Mr. Evans, whose local knowledge of the country is extremely exact, the Roman road ran on the right bank of the Usk; and I traced its course more than once in his company. From the west gate of Caerleon, it went parallel to the walls; then turned at right angles to the west, and in a few hundred yards turning again at right angles, continued southward for a short distance, in which line two sepulchral stones bearing Roman inscriptions have been found. It then resumed a westerly direction, proceeded under the encampment of the Lodge, crossed a brook near some old walls, supposed to have been part of the walls belonging to the ancient suburbs of Caerleon, but which are probably the remains of the gate leading into Lantarnam Park; it here suddenly took a southerly course, continued in a straight line for about a mile, passing near two spots where sepulchral inscriptions* were discovered, and then bent round the Pill.

Here the present road follows unnecessarily a circuitous course, first north and then south, over a steep ridge of hills; but the Roman way took a nearer direction south-westerly, by Tamplin's house, leaving Malpas church on the right, and Crynda House on the left, crossed the present high road, passed the Scelti near the stone bridge, and continued along the fields, where the track is lost among the works of the canal; its direction, however, was evident from an urn and a free stone sarcophagus discovered in digging the canal.

It passed a little to the west of Newport, and led up the hill to the site of St. Woolos church, near the remains of several encampments, and a tumulus now destroyed, which Harris considers as an *arx speculatoria*†.

The course from hence towards the Taaf is doubtful, as the present road divides

* One of these sepulchral stones, which is now in Mr. Butler's cellar at Caerleon, is inscribed D. M. VIBIO PROCYLO. the other DCATEA/I. AMABIL; the inscription on the third is scarcely legible except the words CHOR VI x HAST 7. PRI^o. Communicated by Mr. Evans.

† *Archæologia*, vol. 2. p. 7.

divides into two branches, which unite at St Melon's; the upper leads by Bafaleg, the lower by Tredegar and Caſtleton, and the chain of encampments which I have deſcribed in the eighth chapter, are equally calculated to defend both.

From the union of the two roads, near the church of St. Melon's, and about a quarter of a mile from the encampment of Pen y Pil, the Roman way probably followed the courſe of the preſent turnpike, and after croſſing the Rumney, continued towards the Taaf.

There are evident traces of a Roman cauſeway eaſt from Caerwent to the village of Crick, diſcerned by Horſley and other antiquaries *, and which has been uſually ſuppoſed to form part of the Julia Strata leading from the Severn to Caerwent. Mr. Leman, however, is of opinion that this cauſeway was a continuation of the Akeman ſtreet, between Corinium or Cirenceſter and Caerleon†.

I ſhall now return to thoſe branches of the Julia Strata which paſſed through the other parts of Monmouthſhire, and are ſpecified in the twelfth and fourteenth Iters of Antonine, and the eleventh and thirteenth of Richard.

Antonine Iter. xii.		Richard Iter. xiii.		English Names.
Ab Ifca.		Ab Ifca Uriconium uſque ſic.		
	M. P.		M. P.	
Burrio - - - - -	viii.	Bultro - - - - -	viii.	Uſk.
Gobannio - - - - -	xii.	Gobannio - - - - -	xii.	Abergavenny.
Magnis - - - - -	xxii.	Magna - - - - -	xxiii.	Kencheſter.
Bravinio - - - - -	xxiii.	Branogenio - - - - -	xxiii.	Lentwardine, or Brandan Camp.
Urioconio - - - - -	xxvii.	Urioconio - - - - -	xxvii.	Wroxeter.
	xciii.		xciii.	
Iter xiii.		Iter xiv.		
Ab Ifca.		Ab Ifca, per Glebon, Lindum uſque ſic.		
Burrio - - - - -	viii.	Ballio - - - - -	viii.	Uſk.
Bleſtio - - - - -	xi.	Bleſtio - - - - -	xii.	Monmouth.
Ariconio - - - - -	xi.	Sariconio - - - - -	xi.	Roſe or Berry Hill near Roſs.
Clevo - - - - -	xv.	Glebon Colonia, &c. - - -	xv.	Gloceſter.
	xlvi.		xlvi.	

A branch led from Caerleon to Burrium or Uſk, from which place it divided into

* Horſley, p. 469.

† This road, in its way from Cirenceſter to the Severn, Mr. Leman traced by Trewſbury, Hocbury, and Cherington, in Gloceſterſhire, to the end of the Wolds.

into two ways, one proceeding to Gobannium or Abergavenny, and another to Blestium or Monmouth. The distance from Isca to Burrium is *viii* in Antonine, and *viii* in Richard. There are two ways from Caerleon to *Urk*; the upper, which is the turnpike, passes a steep hill, and crosses the river over a stone bridge to *Urk*; it is not more than seven miles and a quarter. The lower, which is little used for carriages, proceeds along the left bank of the *Urk*, in a more circuitous track, but almost perfectly level, at the foot of Kemeys and Bertholly hills and the Pencamawr, under a chain of encampments *, and above the marshy plain, which is subject to perpetual inundations; the distance is about eight miles, and the road bends to accommodate itself to the numerous sinuosities of the river, as far as the lane leading to Tredonnoc bridge. From thence it continues as straight as an arrow to Lantrifaint; where the present road makes a circuit over the hill into the highway from *Urk* to the New Passage, and descends to Lanllowell, leaving the church on the left. But the old road, which I conceive to be the site of the Roman way, continued straight on the right side of the church to Lanllowell, where it formed an obtuse angle, and proceeded with the line of the present road to *Urk*. The length being greater than that of the upper road, accords better with the distances in the Itineraries.

The course of the Roman road from *Urk* to Blestium, comes next under consideration. The distance is *xi* miles according to Antonine, and *xii* according to Richard. Two roads lead from *Urk* to Monmouth; one by Raglan, which is twelve miles and a half, and the other by Pen y Clawdd is not more than eleven. The last I consider to have been the direction of the Roman road,

at

Wolds. It traverses the turnpike from Tetbury to Hampton, passes a house called the Star and Garter, to Chevenage Green, from whence it is an obscure horse-way through the inclosures to the Bath turnpike, (which it crosses about a quarter of a mile before the separation of the Frocester and Rodborough roads); then descends into Lashborough Vale with a kind of sweep, and winds up the opposite hill to regain its course, having as usual tumuli for a direction on each side. It passes the inclosures by the edge of the valley in which Bagpshat village is placed, tending towards a vast tumulus on the brow of the hill, close to the turnpike leading to Dursley and Rodborough, and near Symond's hall, a farm house belonging to

lord Berkeley, on the edge of the Wolds. The first object on reaching this tumulus is Lydney, which was evidently a Roman station, on the opposite side of the Severn in the forest of Dean. Here Mr. Leman pursued it no farther, and could not decide whether it proceeded to Oldbury or Aust; but was of opinion that it communicated with the Via Julia at Caerwent. See the sketch of this road on the plate of the Roman roads. Mr. Lysons in his learned and elegant work on the antiquities of Woodchester traces this road, which he calls the Ikenild Street, by Trewsbury, Cherrington, Kingscote, and Croomhall to Aust.

* Kemeys Folly, Coed y Caerau, and Caerlicyn. See Appendix, N^o. 3.

at least as far as Pen y Clawdd. It runs along the Vale of Usk, leaving Landenny church on the left, at the distance of about half a mile, ascends Lanerth hill, and proceeds in a straight line to Pen y Clawdd, passing by the church, which is placed on a summit; the meaning of this name, which signifies the head of the dike, implies that a great causeway reached this point of the eminence. From this place, after descending a quarter of a mile, the present road loses its straight direction, and pursuing a winding course, falls into the upper road from Usk by Raglan to Monmouth. The sudden change from a straight to a waving line, instantly convinced me that it had lost the track of the Roman causeway, which probably ran by a shorter and more level course to Mitchel Troy, and near the present site of Troy house to Monmouth.

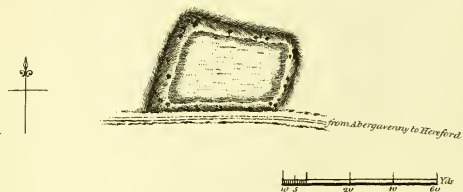
Both Antonine and Richard agree in placing Ariconium or Sariconium, the next station, at the distance of x i miles from Blestium. Ariconium is now supposed, by the best antiquaries, to be Rose or Berry hill in the parish of Bollitree, which is ten or eleven miles from Monmouth. The road probably ran along the site of the present turnpike to the ford of the Wy near Goodrich, leaving an entrenchment and tumulus at a little distance to the left, opposite Dixon church, and passing at the foot of the little Doward, on the summit of which is an encampment, supposed by some antiquaries to be Roman. The name of Whitchurch STREET, by which it is distinguished, seems to indicate the existence of a Roman way; yet in the whole course of the road to Goodrich, I could not discover any vestiges of an ancient causeway, either from my own observations, or from repeated enquiries among the natives.

During various excursions in the vicinity of Monmouth, the only road bearing positive marks of Roman origin, is that which leads from the left bank of the Wy up the Kymin, passes by Stanton in Gloucestershire, and was part of the old way from Monmouth to Gloucester. At this place are many indications of a Roman settlement; the name of Stanton * proves the existence of a Roman causeway; vestiges of considerable entrenchments appear in the vicinity of the church, and quantities of Roman cinders † are scattered about the fields.

* Stanton signifies Stane town, or the Town on the Stone Street.

† See p. 86.

Pelt y Bala Encampment near Campston

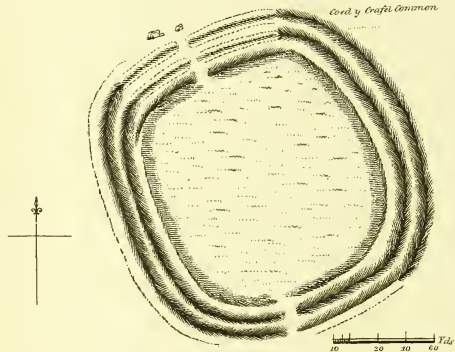


Gwern Castle near Campston

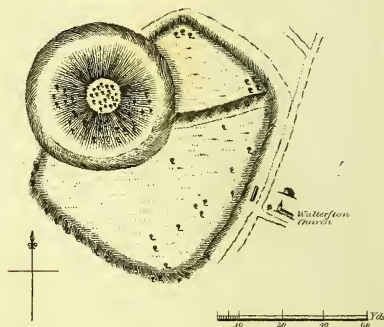


Coedy Crafel Encampment near Wallerston

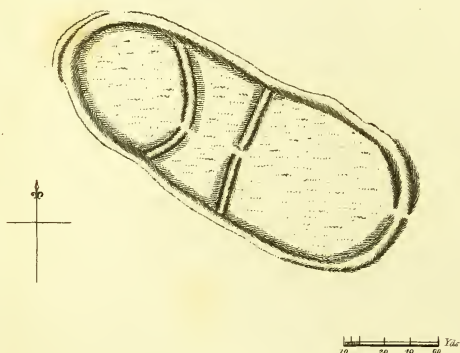
Coedy Crafel Common



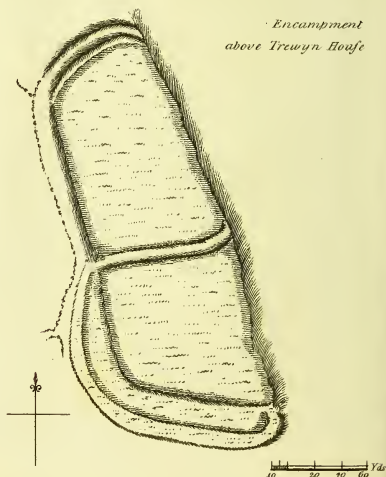
Encampment at Wallerston



Encampment on the Summit of the Gaer



*Encampment
above Trewyn House*



fields. The short time of my continuance at Monmouth, and the numerous objects which attracted my attention within the county, prevented me from tracing its course farther than Stanton, which is only three miles from Monmouth. It was perhaps part of the old Roman way which led from Blestium to Glevum or Glocester, by a nearer communication than through Ariconium; or to Lydney, on the banks of the Severn.

The distance of the other branch from Burrium or Usk, to Gobannium or Abergavenny, is marked by Antonine and Richard at xxii M. P. sufficiently suiting the distance on both sides of the Usk, which cannot be less than eleven miles. The course of this Iter however, has escaped the researches of all our antiquaries, and my utmost efforts to discover it were ineffectual.

From Gobannium, according to the Itinerary, a way led to Magna, or Kenchester in Herefordshire, distant according to Antonine xxiii , according to Richard xxiiii miles, which agrees with the situation of the two places. From the nature of the country it must have passed by or near Lanvihangel, but the exact line I could not discover. A little beyond Lanvihangel, where a stone bridge crosses the Hondy, its progress northward is apparent by its rectilinear course, and occasional swell, in the direction of the road to Longtown by Trewyn; above which place, on the summit of the hill, is an ancient encampment*. From hence I could no longer trace its direction, but it probably passed, as Stukeley supposes, at the foot of the Black mountains, not far from Oldcastle, which he erroneously imagines to be Blestium†. On both sides of this road are several encampments, all of which I had not time to visit; but of which engravings are annexed, from plans taken at my request by Mr. Morrice‡.

Such is the best account which I was able to collect of the Roman roads in Monmouthshire, mentioned in the Itineraries; but there were undoubtedly other

* See p. 222, and the ground plan of this camp on the annexed plate.

† See chapter 23.

‡ Of these encampments Coed y Crafel deserves particular notice; it is situated near Walterstone in

Herefordshire, but close to the frontiers of Monmouthshire. It is nearly square, with the corners rounded, and some considerable vestiges of a Roman tessellated pavement were found there. See the plate.

Strange, *Archæologia*, vol. 6, p. 13.

other ways, as well military as vicinal, which communicated directly with some of the greater stations, or formed a regular connection with the districts occupied by the Romans in the mountains, for the purpose of opening mines, of which traces are frequent in many parts of the county.

In the course of my Tour I observed vestiges of several, which appeared to be of Roman origin, particularly in the neighbourhood of Lanvihangel Crickornell, where the names of Upper and Lower Stanton seem to indicate the site of a Roman road, and where the remains of numerous entrenchments, which might have served as exploratory camps, are still manifest*.

A road must have led from Abergavenny through the Vale of the Usk north-west to the Gaer, situated about two miles north-west of Brecon, "on a gentle eminence, at the conflux of the rivers Eskir and Uske." Mr. Wyndham† traced part of the walls, which he describes as exactly similar to those of Caerleon, and Mr. Leman found several bricks bearing the inscription of LEG II AVG.

There seems also to have been a Roman road from Abergavenny, communicating with the stations in Glamorganshire. Bad weather and want of time prevented me from exploring the whole of this track; but in an excursion to the western boundaries of Monmouthshire, I travelled over that part of it which stretches from Penllwyn, north to Bydwellyt, and the Sorwy furnace. It forms a straight line, from forty to fifty feet in breadth between the hedges, which is an uncommon circumstance in this county, where the roads are usually extremely narrow; in many places I observed vestiges of a causeway, paved with large flag stones; in some parts there was little more than a pathway in the midst of this broad road; but in others, the whole causeway remained entire and swelling, though furrowed with the tracks of horses. These appearances are peculiarly striking about half a mile beyond Bydwellyt church, near which are remains of a strong entrenchment. I traced it only four miles; but I am informed by gentlemen who have much frequented these mountains

* See the Plate.

† See Wyndham's Tour: Strange and Harris suppose the Gaer to be the Magna of Antoninus.

The general line of this road from Gobannium

to the Gaer, and from thence to Nidus or Neath, is marked in the sketches of the Roman roads annexed to this chapter.

mountains for grouse shooting, that it continues north some miles farther, and then turns to the east and north-east over the moors, in a direction to Abergavenny. This road is called by the natives *farn hir*, or the long paved causeway, a name which sufficiently bespeaks it to be Roman, Sarn in Welsh having the same signification as Stane or Street in English*.

* See p. 24.

SECTION 3.

Ancient Encampments.—Castles.—Churches.

REMAINS of numerous encampments are still manifest in various parts of Monmouthshire, which have been called British, Roman, Saxon or Danish, according to the systems adopted by different authors.

Harris, who had the merit of discovering several of these camps, ascribes to them all a Roman origin, merely because a few Roman coins or portable antiquities have been found either in their sites or in their vicinities*. But this circumstance cannot be considered as positive evidence of a Roman camp; for long after the departure of the Romans their money was current among the Britons, and the Saxons and Danes conveyed the plunder of the places they over-ran to their own towns and camps.

Perhaps a square or parallelogramical form, independent of Roman roads and antiquities, is the only *indubitable* mark of Roman origin. It does not however appear, that the Romans, in all times, in all countries, and in all places, invariably formed their camps on the same plan; for there are several in England of circular, elliptical, and even irregular figures, which are unanimously allowed to be Roman; and we learn from Vegetius, that although a camp was most complete when its breadth was two thirds of its length, yet the form alone did not constitute its goodness, but it might be square, triangular, or semicircular, according to the nature of the ground†.

Should we consider the rectangular form alone, as indicative of a Roman camp,

we

* Archæologia, vol. 2.

† See Vegetius, lib. 1. cap. 23.

we could not ascribe more than three or four of those of which I have given plans to the Romans; whereas during a residence of three hundred years in this country they must have occupied many summer camps, as well as small posts, for the protection of their convoys, and the security of their cattle. We must therefore either suppose, that many of these were British, occupied by the Romans, or Roman, occupied and altered by the Britons, Saxons, and Danes. Several, however, bear evident traces of a Saxon and Danish origin, in the depth of the ditches and height of the vallums, and were formed during their predatory incursions into these parts. But as the Saxons and Danes never retained permanent possession of the country, we have reason to conclude, that the greater part of the encampments were British. As I cannot presume to discriminate the specific characteristics of each, I have given plans of the principal encampments from actual surveys, that those who are versed in this species of knowledge, may judge of their origin.

Among the principal objects of historical importance, the castles arrest the attention of the curious traveller. From the want of authentic documents, and the doubtful characters of our ancient architecture, it is not easy to ascertain the precise æra of their construction, and to distinguish their different proprietors. Stone castles were undoubtedly used by the Romans, and occupied on their departure by the Britons, who had been trained under their military discipline. The Saxons, in their gradual conquest of England, obtained possession of these strong holds, and constructed others in various parts of the country. The roundness of the arches, and other leading characters of Roman architecture, were still preserved; but the simplicity and elegance were lost in a more ponderous style; their buildings were loaded with rude and fantastic ornaments, and as the arts of war changed, new modes of defence were introduced, particularly during the contest between the Saxons and Danes. It is, however, acknowledged that these castles were few in number, and much dilapidated at the time of the conquest; a circumstance which principally contributed to the success of the Norman invasion.

From the necessity of retaining the natives in subjection, the conquerors re-

paired the old fortresses, and constructed new castles in different parts of the kingdom. These strong holds became so numerous, that in little more than a century their number exceeded eleven hundred.

On their first arrival the Normans employed the same mode of architecture as the Saxons, but with larger dimensions, and perhaps with a greater number of capricious ornaments; and hence arises the great difficulty of distinguishing a Saxon from a Norman building erected at this period.

Towards the commencement of the twelfth century, a criterion of distinction was derived from the introduction of the pointed, or as it is usually called, the gothic arch, which probably owed its origin to the intersection of the semicircular arches in the ornamental parts of the Saxon or Norman buildings. It was at first sparingly employed; but was gradually intermixed with the Saxon or Norman style, until it came into general use, before the latter end of the same century.

At its first appearance, which seems to be earlier than is generally supposed, the gothic architecture was plain and unadorned, but was gradually distinguished by slender and clustered columns, lightness of the walls, numerous buttresses, and by a profusion of ornaments. In the age of Henry the sixth it reached its highest perfection, as may be seen in the beautiful specimen of King's College in the university of Cambridge. Soon after that period, the arch became wider and less pointed, and gradually tended to a circular form. Towards the middle of the sixteenth century, a whimsical intermixture of Roman, Saxon, Norman, and gothic architecture was introduced, and retained until the adoption of the Palladian style.

Most of these styles are observable in the castles, churches, and other ancient buildings of Monmouthshire. Few Roman remains exist, and the Saxons being never possessors of the whole county, could leave but few specimens of their architecture, and those of a period when it is difficult to distinguish it from that of the early Normans; but the gothic is most prevalent. From these circumstances, as well as from historical evidence, it is probable that the greater part of the castles in this county owed their origin to the Normans, and

were built or repaired after the introduction of gothic architecture : none, perhaps, except Scenfreth, are wholly Saxon or early Norman ; a few exhibit an intermixture of the Norman and gothic ; and the rest are entirely gothic.

The churches are singularly picturesque, from their situation, form and appearance ; they stand in the midst of the fields, and on the banks of the rivers ; are often embowered in trees, and generally at a considerable distance from any habitation.

A whimsical and not unpleasing effect is sometimes produced by the coat of plaister or lime with which they are covered. The body of the church is usually whitened, occasionally also the tower ; in some instances the tower is uncoloured, and in others the battlements only are white-washed. This intermixture of colours is ingeniously accounted for by Effex in his remarks on ancient brick and stone buildings in England : “ The Normans frequently raised large buildings with pebbles only, and sometimes with pebbles intermixt with rag-stones. As this rough manner of building with rag-stones and other irregular materials, required a coat of plaistering to make them fair without and neat within, we find that those small churches and other buildings which were built in this manner, were always plaistered in the inside, and frequently on the outside, with a composition of lime and sand, the remains of which may be traced in many of the Saxon and Norman churches, and in some more modern *.”

These churches exhibit different styles of architecture ; many of them, particularly in the mountainous districts, are very ancient, and it is probable that a few were constructed by the Britons, some by the Saxons, and several at an early period of the Norman monarchy, as is evident from the rounded arches and mouldings peculiar to those styles ; but the far greater part were built since the introduction of gothic architecture.

The first are generally of a simple form, of small dimensions, shaped like a barn, without any distinction in the breadth or height between the nave and the chancel, and without a belfry.

The

* Effex's remarks on the antiquity and different modes of brick and stone buildings in England. *Archæologia*, vol. 4. p. 101.

The second species is of somewhat later date: the chancel is narrower and less lofty than the church; a small belfry is also placed over the roof at the western extremity, with one or two apertures* for bells, the ropes of which descend into the church.

The third species consists of a nave, a chancel, and a tower or belfry, which is sometimes placed at the western extremity, sometimes in the middle, and sometimes at the side. The tower was at first rude and massive, afterwards increased in height and lightness, was ornamented with battlements, and in later times with pinnacles. A few, particularly those in the eastern parts of the county, are provided with steeples, and are scarcely earlier than the 13th century.

Many of the churches have undergone little change since the æra of the Reformation, and exhibit traces of the Roman Catholic worship, particularly in the niches for saints, the receptacles for holy water, and sometimes in the vestiges of the confessional chair.

Many also contain remains of the rood loft †; almost all of the doorway and side staircase, which led to it. In several churches I observed the transverse beams from which the cross was suspended, and in that of Bettws Newydd almost the whole loft remains ‡. In many parts of this county, the poor of every persuasion still retain the custom of begging bread for *the souls of the departed* on all Souls' day; the bread then given, is called *Bara ran*, or Dole bread.

The fonts are in general remarkable for size and rudeness of workmanship; circumstances which bespeak antiquity, and prove that they were formed when baptism was performed by immersion§, and not by sprinkling.

A remarkable custom of high antiquity, which greatly disfigures the churches,

is

* See the views of Malpas and Llanfawr churches. In the course of this work, engravings are given of the different churches from the Saxon or early Norman to the later gothic.

† "The holy rood, or rood loft, derives its name from the Saxon word rode, or rood, which signifies a cross. It was an image of Christ upon the cross, made generally of wood, and placed in a loft or gallery, over the passage leading from the nave into the

chancel. The nave without represented the church militant, and the chancel the church triumphant, and those who passed from the one to the other, must go under the cross and suffer affliction." *History of Churches in England*, p. 199.

‡ Page 163.

§ Immersion was the common form of administering baptism in the thirteenth century.

is prevalent in these parts. The inside of the church is often the common place of sepulture. When a corpse is buried, the pavement is taken up, a grave raised, in the same manner as in common church yards, and this heap of earth strewed with flowers and ever-greens*. As this custom is annually repeated, and considered as a testimony of remembrance, the stones are seldom replaced, the faded plants rot on the surface of the grave, the floor is damp and dirty, and these tributes of affection, though pleasing objects in the church yards, become offensive and disgusting.

* To the custom of scattering flowers over the graves of deceased friends, David ap Gwilym beautifully alludes in one of his odes:

"O whilst thy season of flowers, and thy tender sprays thick of leaves remain; I will pluck the roses from the brakes; the flowerets of the meads, and gems of the woods; the vivid trefoils, beauties of the ground, and the gaily smiling bloom of the verdant

herbs, to be offered to the memory of a chief of fairest fame: Humbly will I lay them on the grave of Ivor!" Appendix, p. 410.

See also an interesting tale, on the graves of Glamorganshire, which relates to this custom, in the Essay on Funeral Rites; in the Female Mentor, Conversation 42.

A

T O U R

IN

MONMOUTHSHIRE.

CHAPTER I.

Passage of the Severn.—Charlton Rock.—Black Rock and House.—St. Pierre.—Ancient Tomb.—Pedigree of the Lewis Family.

I CROSSED into Monmouthshire by the new passage. The breadth of the Severn from shore to shore, at high water, is three miles and a quarter, from the inn on one side to that on the other three and a half. The shores of Gloucestershire are quite flat at the place of embarkation; higher up, near the old passage, the cliffs are rocky and steep.

The shore of Monmouthshire rises gradually from the edge of the water into gentle acclivities, richly wooded, and interspersed with fields of corn and pasture; above those acclivities extend ridges of hills, which commence with Wind Cliff and the wooded eminences of Piercefield, and join the two grey hills above Lanvair. Beyond them to the west, towers the Pencamawr, and the eye catches a distant view of Twyn Barlwm, and the Machen Hill, terminating in the eminences beyond Newport, in the County of Glamorgan.

We passed near a rocky islet, scarcely half a mile from the shore of Monmouthshire, which is well known by the appellation of Charlton Rock; at low water it is almost half a mile in circumference, and at high tide is sometimes wholly covered, except a pyramid, which has been recently erected. The stone is highly esteemed for its durability, and was lately employed by the architect of Newport bridge for the lower part of the piers. This islet is often mistaken by authors for the Black Rock, which is the landing place of the new passage.

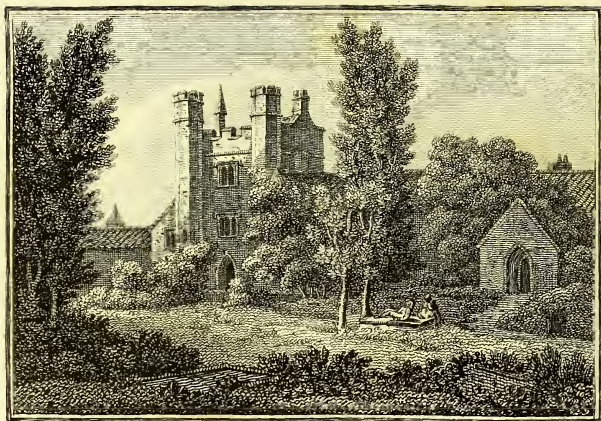
The discovery of Roman coins on this insulated rock, which, if we may judge from its present size and situation, could never have been inhabited, has puzzled the best informed antiquaries, and has led some to conjecture, that it was once joined to the continent, or is the remains of a larger island. I disembarked at the Black Rock, under a low but precipitous cliff of red stone, which is striking to a traveller who has just quitted the sandy level of the Gloucestershire shore, and ascended to the inn, which is built on the summit of the cliff overhanging the Severn: from this place I made several excursions in the vicinity.

This ferry over the new passage, which is certainly not less ancient than that over the old passage, has from time immemorial belonged to the respectable family of Lewis of St. Pierre. An interesting incident in the life of Charles the first, occasioned its suppression by Oliver Cromwell. The king being pursued by a strong party of the enemy, rode through Shire Newton, and crossed the Severn to Chisell Pill, on the Gloucestershire side: the boat had scarcely returned, before a corps of about sixty republicans followed him to the Black Rock, and instantly compelled the boatmen, with drawn swords, to ferry them across. The boatmen, who were royalists, left them on a reef, called the English Stones, which is separated from the Gloucestershire shore by a lake fordable at low water; but as the tide, which had just turned, flowed in with great rapidity, they were all drowned in attempting to cross. Cromwell, informed of this event, abolished the ferry; and it was not renewed till 1718. The renewal occasioned a law suit between the family of St. Pierre and the duke of Beaufort's guardians: in the course of the suit, several witnesses were called, and depositions taken, before a commission of the high court of Chancery, held at the Elephant coffee house, in Bristol, which stated the undoubted right of Mr. Lewis, and incidentally mentioned the interesting anecdote relating to the escape of Charles the first*.

A pleasant

* Charles Lewis, Esq. obligingly communicated to me a copy of these depositions, from which I shall insert that of Giles Gilbert, of Shire Newton, which is the most circumstantial: "And this deponent particularly remembers, that in the reign of king Charles the first, it was reported, that his Majesty crossed the said passage from the said Black Rock to Chisell Pill; and this deponent believes the same, for that this deponent saw him ride through Shire Newton, near the

said passage, in order to cross over the same, and about one hour after his majesty passed by, he was pursued by his enemies, or Oliver's soldiers, whom this deponent saw going hastily near Portscuet, who as this deponent heard, upon their coming up to the said Black Rock passage, and there finding the king to have just passed over, drew their swords upon some boatmen, belonging to the said passage, that were there, and forced them on board one of the passage boats,



R. B. Smith

ST PIERRE.
March 1, 1890, by C. H. S. S.

W. B. Smith



R. B. Smith

MOINS' COURT GATEWAY.
Feb. 1, 1890, by C. H. S. S.

W. B. Smith

A pleasant walk across the fields, by the side of the Severn, leads to St. Pierre, the residence of the ancient family of Lewis. The house stands at a small distance from the Severn, near half a mile from the high road leading to Chepstow. It is an ancient structure, much altered, and modernised with sash windows; one, however, still remains, which proves it to have been constructed as early as the fourteenth century. The gateway is still more ancient, and in feudal times was part of the old castellated mansion; it is a gothic portal, flanked by two pentagon embattled turrets, and has a very picturesque appearance; its form may be seen in the annexed engraving.

The present proprietor, Mr. Lewis, was so obliging as to accompany me through the apartments; the frieze of the dining-room is ornamented with coats of arms, carved and emblazoned, among which I noticed the lion argent on a sable field, the arms of the present family, which they bear from their ancestor Cadivor the Great, who died in 1084, and was buried in the priory of Caermarthen. I observed likewise a griffin segreant sable, the arms of the Morgan family, who are derived from the same stock. The leaden spouts of the house are also marked with the lion, griffin, and three bulls heads; the three bearings of Cadivor the Great, and his immediate descendants.

Among a few pictures, one portrait attracted my attention: it represents a man habited in a coat of mail, without a helmet, his hair flowing, and holding a pistol in his right hand; a page is fastening on his sash, as if he was preparing for combat: the picture is well painted, and the countenance in particular is expressive and animated. According to the tradition of the family, it is the portrait of Thomas Lewis, of St. Pierre, who lived in the time of Charles the first, and for his attachment to the royal cause, was confined twenty years in the castle of Chepstow; but this tradition does not accord with historical fact. It does not appear that Thomas Lewis was ever confined in the castle

and the said boatmen carried them over, and landed or put them on shore on the rocks, called the English Stones, on the Gloucestershire side of the said passage, near Chepstow Pill, and left them there, when the tide coming on them, they were all lost or drowned, as this deponent verily believes, and was credibly informed, the very next day, by the boatmen who car-

ried them over; when this deponent, upon the report of the accident, went down to the said passage to enquire into the truth thereof; and this deponent saith, that he hath heard, and been informed, and believes, that the said passage was afterwards put down by Oliver Cromwell on that occasion."

castle of Chepstow, or that he could have been imprisoned twenty years, as it was not so long in the possession of Cromwell.

I am inclined to believe, that it is the portrait of the celebrated regicide Harry Marten; he was confined *exactly twenty years* in the castle of Chepstow, and, with the permission of his guard, was occasionally received at the hospitable mansion of Mr. Thomas Lewis, who though a staunch loyalist, did not suffer his political principles to weigh against his benevolence. Marten, as a proof of gratitude, presented his portrait to his protector; it has since remained in the possession of the family, but being neglected and forgotten, was casually found by one of the descendants: unwilling to believe that his loyal predecessor had preserved the portrait of a regicide, and misunderstanding the tradition relating to the picture, he mistook Harry Marten for his ancestor. I am able to confirm this conjecture. An old butler, since dead, and a housekeeper, both of whom lived for a considerable time in the family, agreed in averring, that it was the portrait of Harry Marten: Mrs. Williams, also, who died last year, at a very advanced age, in Chepstow castle, frequently mentioned that his portrait was at St. Pierre. As her mother resided in the castle during the imprisonment of Harry Marten, and as Mrs. Williams had conversed with two of his servants, her evidence, in addition to the assertions of the butler and housekeeper, must be decisive; I have, therefore, given an engraving of the head.

The family derives its appellation from this place of their residence, which is so called from the church dedicated to St. Peter; in Latin it is denominated *Sancti Petri Ecclesia*, and probably took its French appellation from the Norman family, who were seated here soon after the Conquest, and built the church*.

The church, which is contiguous to the house, is an ancient building of small dimensions, barn-like shape, and without any distinction between the nave and the chancel. Two curious sepulchral stones, which were discovered in 1764, in laying the foundation of a building adjoining to the house, are deposited in the church porch.

Of

* It is written differently in different ages; I trace on the monumental inscriptions, the appellations of Sene Peare, San Pere, St. Peers, St. Peare; but it is now denominated St. Pierre.

Of these sepulchral stones, which have attracted the attention of the antiquary, fac similes have been given by Mr. Strange, in the fifth volume of the *Archæologia*, and by Mr. Pegge, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1765 *. On one of the stones is carved a plain cross and a sword, with an inscription round the verge in old French rhyme.

Ici git le cors v. de sene pere,
 Preez pur li en bone manere ;
 Qe Jesu pur sa pasiun,
 De phecez li done pardun.

Amen, R. P.

Here lies the body of Urien St. Pierre ; pray devoutly for his soul ; that Jesus, for his passion's sake, would give him pardon for his sins.

The other stone being exactly of the same size and shape, is supposed to have been a partner to the former ; but Mr. Pegge imagines that it was the stone which covered the grave of his wife Margaret : it contains no inscription, but bears the figure of a hand holding a cross ; the stem of which is ornamented with rude figures, representing three falcons, a dragon, and a lion. Above the cross is a vacant space for a coat of arms, with ten pellets or bezants.

Dr. Milles, late dean of Exeter, concludes, from the sculpture and inscriptions, that these stones were about the age of Edward the first, and supposes the words *CORS V.* to be *corfu*, the old French term for body. Others conjecture, with greater probability, that *V.* is intended for *Urien*, and that it is the tomb of Urien St. Pierre, knight. According to Dugdale, he lived in the reign of Henry the third, and died 1239, leaving, by his wife Margaret, a son Urien de St. Pierre, then sixteen years of age. " He was also a knight, and left issue John de St. Pere, 8 E. III. who was probably the last male heir of that line, for Isabella de St. Pere, his sister and heiress, about 30 E. III. was married to Sir Walter Cokesey, knight, who died 6 H. IV. † "

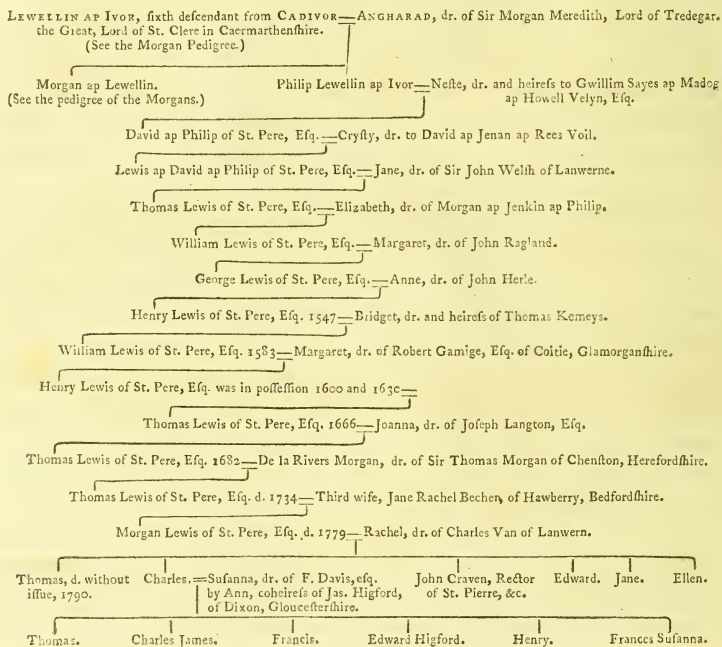
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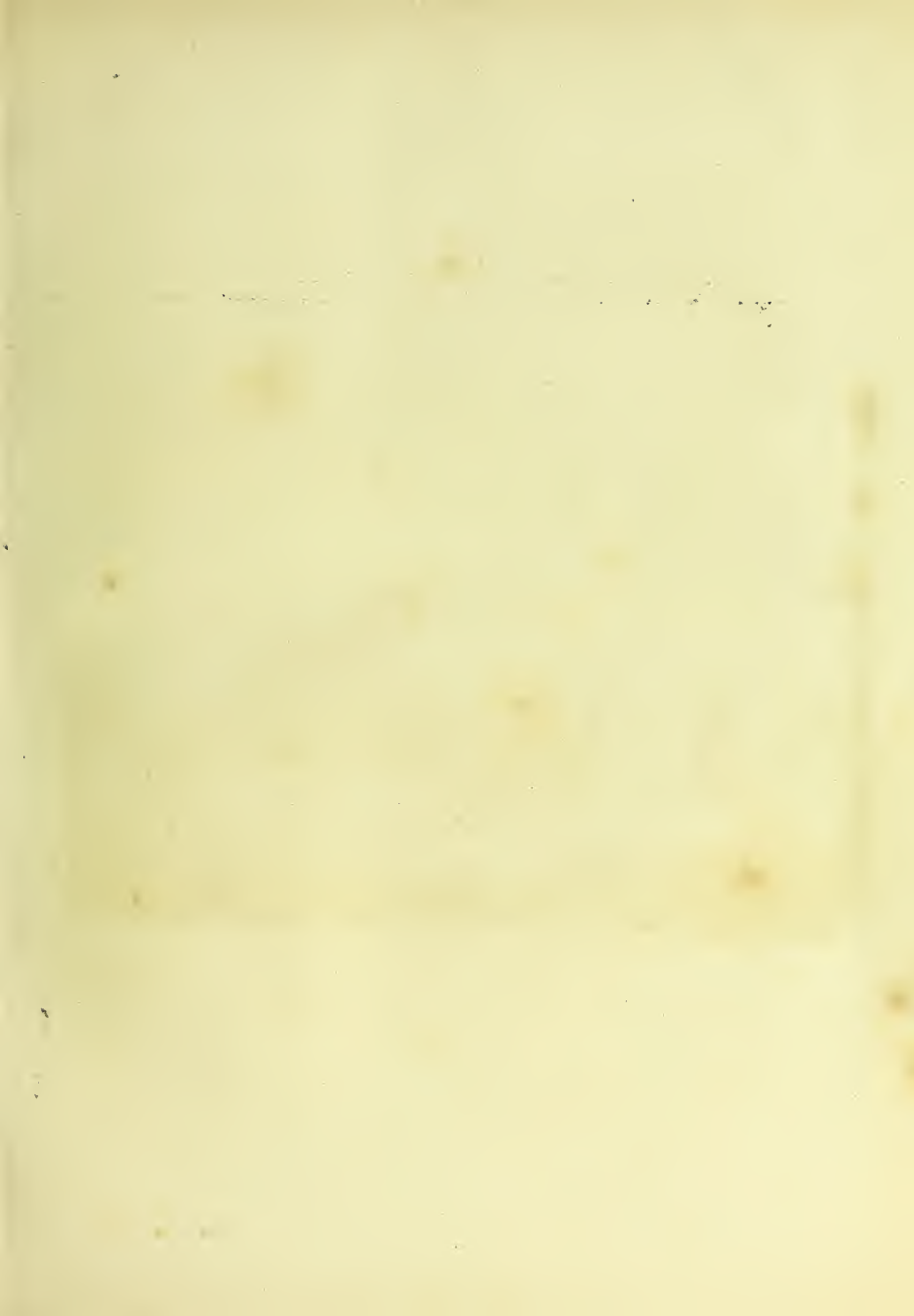
* The engraving in the *Archæologia* is more correct than that in the *Gentleman's Magazine*: for the hand which holds the cross is clasped, and not open. In both, however, there is a defect; the blank slip, as

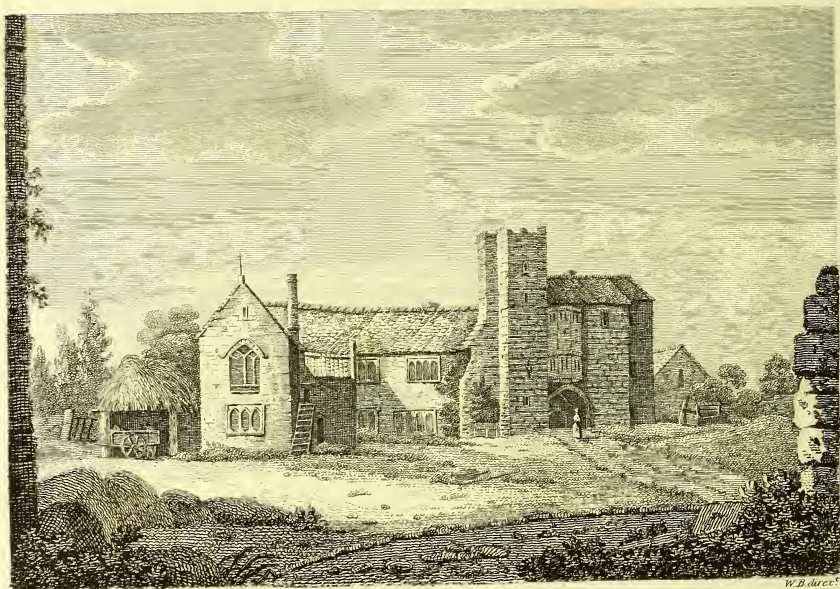
it is called in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and which puzzled Mr. Pegge, does not exist in the manner represented in the engravings; it is only that part of the stone which is not cut down.

† *Gent. Mag.* vol. 35. p. 72.

It also appears, from the pedigree of the Lewis's here annexed, that about this period David, son of Philip ap Lewellin, was possessor of St. Pierre; but whether it devolved to him by purchase, or by marriage, there are no documents in the family to determine. Philip ap Lewellin, founder of the line of Lewis of St. Pierre, was a younger son of Lewellin, lord of St. Clere, in Caermarthenshire, who became lord of Tredegar, by espousing Angharad, daughter of fir Morgan Meredith. The succession has continued in an uninterrupted line from the first settlement of David ap Philip of St. Pierre. The present proprietor is Charles Lewis, esquire, on whom the estate devolved, by the death of his brother Thomas Lewis, esquire, without issue.







EPISCOPAL PALACE AT MATHEM.

Published March 1. 1800. by Cadell & Davies, Strand.

CHAPTER 2.

Mathern.—Ancient Residence of the Bishops of Landaff.—Church.—Inscription on King Theodorick.—Moinfcourt.—Runfton.

FROM St. Pierre I crossed the brook called Pool Meyric, which falls into the Severn, and forms the Pill of St. Pierre, and walked about half a mile to Mathern, formerly the epifcopal refidence of the bifhops of Landaff. It is pleafantly fituated in an undulating country, a mile and a half to the fouth weft of Chepstow, and is remarkable in the ecclefiaftical hiftory of Monmouthshire. Leland calls Mathern “a preaty pyle in Bafe Venteland, longing to the bifhop of Landaff*.” The laft ‘bifhop who refided at this place was William Beaw, who died in 1706, with whom the grandmother of the prefent tenant lived in the capacity of houfekeeper.

The palace was built by different bifhops. The tower, porch, and other parts to the north and north eaft, were probably conftituted by John de la Zouch, a monk of the order of Minorites, who was confecrated in 1408. Miles Salley, who was promoted to the fee in 1504, erected the chapel, hall, kitchen, and adjoining apartments †. The prefent kitchen was the ancient fitting room, and the hall is a well proportioned lofty apartment.

The palace, which is a quadrangular building, inclofing a court yard, is now converted into a farm houfe, and is in a bad ftate of dilapidation; it ftill, however, preferves fome remains of ancient grandeur, and from its irregularities has a picturefque effect. The outfide ornaments of the eaftern window of the chapel are ftill vifible. The dilapidations have even extended to the library, which was once not inconfiderable: There now remain only a few worm-eaten volumes of the ancient fathers, without covers, and mouldering into duft. Within the

memory

* Leland’s Itin, vol. 5. fol. 6.

† Godwin, De Praefulibus Angliæ.

memory of the present tenant, a fine porch formed the entrance into the yard, and was remarkable for its height and breadth, being sufficiently large to admit two waggons abreast.

The estate, now belonging to the bishop of Landaff, is let for forty pounds a year: several adjoining buildings, particularly the public house, were appendages to the palace, when the bishops resided here in a style of magnificence suitable to their rank and situation.

Matherne is supposed to derive its name from Merthur Tewdric, which signifies the martyr Theodoric, who, according to the ancient legends of the see, and an inscription in the chancel, was buried in the church; the history of this personage is thus related by Godwin, in his account of the see of Landaff*:

“ The manor of Matherne, where there is now a palace, was given to the bishops of Landaff by Maurice, king of Glamorganshire, about the year 560, on the following occasion: His father, St. Theodoric, as he is usually called, having resigned his crown to this son, embraced the life of a hermit. The Saxons invading the country, Theodoric was reluctantly called from his hermitage to take the command of the army; he defeated them near Tintern upon the Wye; being mortally wounded in the engagement, he precipitated his return, that he might die among his friends, and desired his son to erect a church, and bury him on the spot where he breathed his last: he had scarcely proceeded five miles, when he expired at a place near the conflux of the Wye and the Severne; hence, according to his desire, a small chapel being erected, his body was placed in a stone coffin. As I was giving orders to repair this coffin, which was either broken by chance, or decayed by age, I discovered his bones, not in the smallest degree changed, though after a period of a thousand years, the skull retaining the aperture of a large wound, which appeared as if it had been recently inflicted. Maurice gave the contiguous estate to the church, and assigned to the place the name of Merthur Tewdrick, or *the martyrdom of Theodorick*, who, because he perished in battle against the enemies of the christian name, is esteemed a martyr.”

In commemoration of these facts, a church is said to have been erected on its present site by his son Meurig, or Maurice, who is supposed by some to be the

father

* Art. Oudoecius, De Præfulis Angliæ,

father of the Arthur so renowned in British story. Bishop Godwin repaired the tomb, and composed the epitaph or memorial, which is placed on the north side of the chancel.

“ Here lyeth intombed the body of
Theoderick, King of Morganuch or
Glamorgan, commonly called
St. Thewdrick, and accounted a martyr,
because he was slain in a battle against
the Saxons, being then Pagans, and in
defence of the Christian religion. The
battle was fought at Tintern, where he
obtained a great victory. He died here
being in his way homeward, three
days after the battle, having taken
order with Maurice his son who suc-
ceeded him in the Kingdom, that in the
same place he should happen to decease, a
church should be built, and his body buri-
ed in y^e same, which was accordingly performed
in the year 600.”

Maurice is said to have given the manor of Mathern to the see of Landaff; but all these accounts are very uncertain and fabulous.

The present church is so much altered and repaired, that it is difficult to ascertain the æra of its construction; it is, however, much posterior to the Conquest. The body is of rag stone, and is plastered; the tower, which is lofty and square, is of hewn stone uncoloured; the windows are gothic, but of different ages. The inside of the church consists of a nave, two side aisles, and a chancel; the nave is separated from the aisles by low circular arches, reposing on slender columns; at the extremity of the north aisle is a pointed arch which gives a whimsical and motley appearance to this side of the colonade.

A few remains of painted glass windows, which seem to represent armorial bearings, prove its former magnificence; among which, I noticed the portcullis, the

creft of the Beaufort family. The biſhop's throne is a ſimple wooden pew; over the ſeat is inſcribed,

“ Poſuit ſibi et ſucceſſoribus Theophilus Landavenſis

“ Epiſcopus Ann. Dom. 1622. Refecit Ed. Creſſet, 1671.”

The firſt of theſe biſhops, mentioned in this inſcription, was Theophilus Field, fellow of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, and rector of Cotton, Suffolk, who was biſhop of Landaff in 1619, tranſlated to St. David's 1628. The other Edward Creſſet, dean of Hereford, was promoted to the ſee of Landaff in 1748, and died in 1755.

In the church are interred a few of the biſhops who reſided at Mathern, and died without being tranſlated. I could not diſcover any traces of their tombs; but biſhop Godwin has recorded their names. Hugh Jones, who was the firſt Welchman raiſed to the ſee, was preſented in 1566, and died in 1574. William Blethyn, another Welchman, was conſecrated biſhop in 1575, and died in 1590. Matthew Murray, a native of Scotland; he was provoft of Eton College, and biſhop of Fernes; was tranſlated to the ſee of Llandaff in 1627, and departed this life in 1639.

But the moſt remarkable perſonage in this liſt was Anthony Kitchin, who was a Minorite friar. His monkish appellation was Dunſtan, but he aſſumed, at the Reformation, his real name: he is mentioned by biſhop Godwin as the ſhame and reproach of the ſee; although addicted to the Roman catholic worſhip, he was the only biſhop who took the oath of ſupremacy, according to the new forms preſcribed by Henry the eighth and Elizabeth. Of him biſhop Godwin ſays, in the Engliſh edition of his work: “ He was conſecrated May 3, 1545, and enduring all the tempeſtuous changes that happened in the meane time, continued till the 5 yeere of her Majeſtie that now reigneth, viz. the yeere 1563, and then died, having firſt ſo impoveriſhed the biſhopricke by unreaſonable demiſes, of whatſoever was demifeable, as there was no great cauſe he ſhould be ſo loth to leave it *.”

Sir John Harrington, ſpeaking of the ſmall revenues which were annexed to the

2

ſee

* See Godwin's *Lives of the Biſhops*, Lat. and Eng. edit. Article Llandaff.

fee of Llandaff, accuses him as the cause, and, in a quibbling age, heaps upon the name of Kitchin pun upon pun*.

Near Mathern church is Moin'court; in ancient deeds it is called Monk's-court, and an adjoining field is denominated Monk's mead. These appellations seem to imply that it was formerly a religious house, and probably the cell of some monastery. The present structure was built or repaired by bishop Godwin, and his arms, carved in stone, are placed over the front door. It was the residence of Thomas Hughes, a gentleman of considerable property, whose family was connected with that of bishop Godwin by marriage; his grand-daughter Sarah, conveyed it to her husband Richard Lyster of Roughton in Shropshire, and it is now the property of their great-grandson John Owen, Esq. of Penros in Montgomeryshire: it is used as a farm house.

A large stone gate-way leads into the court yard, which is much more ancient than the house; it is extremely picturesque, and is formed by a high gothic porch, flanked with lofty towers; a beautiful and spreading oak overhangs one extremity, and considerably heightens the effect. An engraving of this portal is given, from a drawing by Sir Richard Hoare.

In the walls, which inclose the court yard, I observed two of the Roman inscriptions, which Gibson, in the supplement to Camden, mentions as having been found at Caerleon, and transferred by bishop Godwin to their present situation: they are considerably defaced, and without Gibson's assistance, I could not have

fully

* It is doubtless a wonderful antiquity that my author produced of Llandaff, that it professed christianity, and had a church for religion in the year of 180. But alas, for a man to boast of great nobility, and goe in ragged clothes, and a church to be praised for great antiquity, and make ruinous shewes, is in mine opinion according to the vulgar proverb, *a great boast, and a small roof*. But by this author's relation it appears, this *roof* was so marred by an ill *Cooke*, as by a worse *Kitchen*; for in the year 1545, being the 37 yeere of Henry the eighth, Doctor *Kitchen* being made of an idle abbot, a busie bishop, and wading through those hazardous times that ensued till the first yeere of Queen Elizabeth, to save himselfe was content to *spoil* his bishoprick: Satan

having in those dayes more care to sift the bishopricks then the bishops, else how was it possible for a man of that rancke to sing *Cantate domino canticum novum* four times in fourteen yeeres, and never sing out of tune, if he had not lov'd the *Kitchen* better then the church. Howbeit, though he might seeme for name sake to favour the *Kitchen*, yet in *spoiling* that sea hee was as little friend to the *Kitchen* as the rest, spoiling the woods and good provisions that should have warm'd it, which gave occasion to Dr. Babbington, now bishop of Worcester, to call it *Apb* without land, and Doctor Morgan after to remove to Saint Asaph, from thence not for name sake, but for his owne name sake, that is *More-gaine*."—Nugæ Antiquæ, Vol. 1. p. 191.

fully deciphered them. The first is carved in grit-stone; the letters are an inch in length: I easily deciphered the first seven, and the last word *Restituit*. The inscription commemorated the restoration of the Temple of Diana, by T. Fl. Postumius Varus.

T. FL. POSTVMIVS VARVS.
V. C. LEG. TEMPL. DIANÆ
RESTITVIT.

Interpreted by Gibson, to mean, “Titus Flavius Postumius Varus Veteranus Cohortis Legionis Secundæ Templum Dianæ restituit.” But by Horsley, as implying “Vir clarissimus Legatus, &c.”

The other inscription is cut in free-stone: the letters are an inch and a half in length, and well proportioned: I traced the words *Pro salute Aug. N. N. Severi et Antonini*, evidently proving it to be a votive altar, dedicated to the Emperor Severus and his two sons Caracalla and Geta, with this peculiarity, that the words *Geta Cæsar*, seem to have been erased, after his assassination.

PRO SALVTE
AVGG. N. N.
SEVERI ET ANTONI
NI
P. SALTIVS P. F. MAE.
CIA THALAMVS HADRI.
PRAEF. LEG. II. AVG.
C. VAMPEIANO, ET
LVCILIAN.

From Mathern I returned to the new passage on horseback; I entered the high road two miles from Chepstow, and turning to the left, proceeded straight till I came to the gate-way leading into the park of St. Pierre. At this point three roads diverge; one goes through Caerwent to Newport, the second to Caldecot, and the third leads to Portscwyt and the new passage: these roads are narrow and stony, but are pleasantly lined with

“ Hedge row elms, and coppice green.”

The slopes of the eminences are feathered with groves of forest trees, and much underwood. On one side I caught glimpses of the broad Severn, of the steep Cliffs of Ault, and the rich hills of Gloucestershire; on the other I observed two conspicuous hills of an oblong shape, which tower above Lanvair, and shelve gradually into a cultivated ridge, that again rises and terminates in the rocky and wood-crowned cliffs of Piercefield.

Opposite to the back road, leading to St. Pierre, I turned near a farm house, called Hyers Gate; and riding through a narrow lane to Broadwell farm, ascended to Runston, which was once a place of some magnitude and antiquity, if we may judge from the extent and appearance of its ruins, and from the broad causeways which lead towards it; they occupy an eminence on the side of the road, leading to Shire Newton, in the midst of a thick and solitary wood. The site of the place may be traced to a considerable distance by numerous foundations; but not a single building remains, except an old barn, and a dilapidated chapel.

Evening had just set in, and the moon shone in its full splendour, affording light sufficient, through the gloom of the surrounding trees, to examine the structure: it is a stone building of small dimensions, with the remains of a tower at its western extremity. The door-way is covered with a simple stone lintel, and the windows are all rounded; the nave is separated from the chancel by a stone screen, in the midst of which is a low and narrow semicircular arch of the most simple kind: the roof was fallen down, and the pavement which remained was so slippery, that I could scarcely walk upon it without falling; a large and broken font was lying on the floor, among the weeds and elder trees. The obscurity of this ruined sanctuary, was only broken by the gleams of moonshine, and the melancholy silence interrupted by the sound of my footsteps, and the screams of the birds, which I disturbed from their nightly repose.

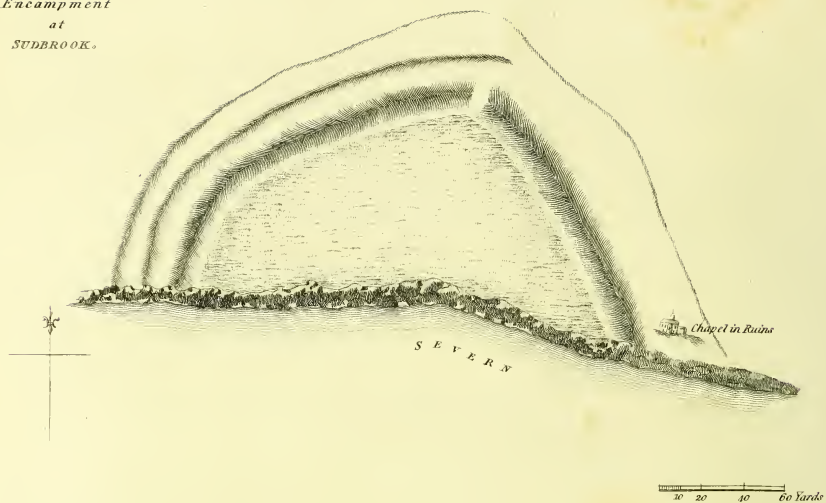
This chapel is annexed to Mathern; service has been performed here within this century; and about thirty years ago, a man of the name of William Jones was here interred. The estate of Runston belongs to the family of St. Pierre, with which parish it is joined in the poor rates.

From Broadwell farm, a narrow and hollow way leads into the high road from Chepstow to Newport, at the village of Crick; its depth and narrowness, and the height

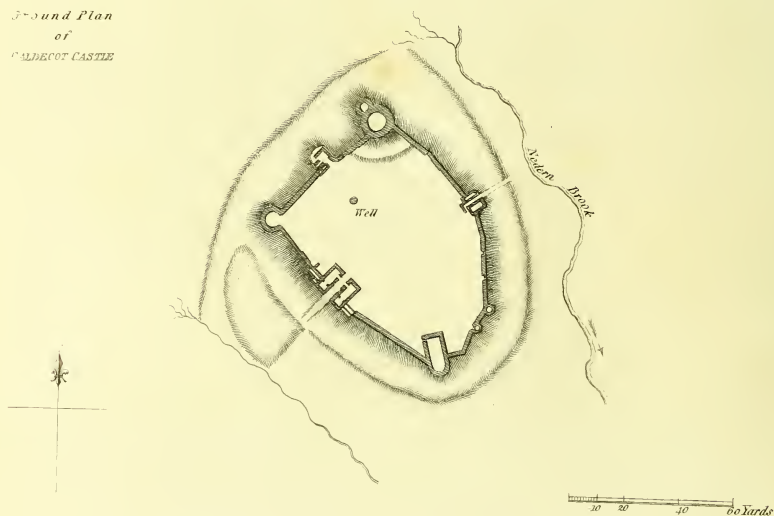
height of the hedges on each side, afforded a striking specimen of the hollow roads which were so common in Monmouthshire before the construction of turnpikes, and reminded me of an anecdote, which my own experience proved to be but little exaggerated. The gentlemen of the county opposing the turnpike act, Valentine Morris of Piercefield, who was a strenuous promoter of it, was examined at the bar of the house of Commons ; being asked " What roads are there in Monmouthshire ? " He replied, " none." " How then do you travel ? " " In ditches."



*Encampment
at
SUDBROOK.*



*Ground Plan
of
CALDECOT CASTLE*



CHAPTER 3.

Sudbrook Encampment.—Chapel.—Portswit.—Caldecot Castle.

TO the west of the new passage inn, near the ruins of Sudbrook or Trinity Chapel, are remains of an entrenchment, which are usually supposed to be Roman; they occupy a flat surface on the edge of a perpendicular cliff, and are nearly in the form of a stretched bow *, whose cord is the sea coast. The entrenchment is formed by a triple rampart of earth, and two ditches; the two exterior ramparts are low, and in many places destroyed; the interior is in greater preservation, and not less than twenty feet in height. On the two extreme parts of the elevated rampart towards the sea, I observed heaps of stones and rubbish, which seem to be the remains of ancient buildings; among these were two or three ranges of large stones, placed on each other, without cement, and others of the same kind which had fallen down, strewed the adjacent ground. A large opening in the rampart towards the north, still remaining, was formerly the great entrance; the distance from the opening to the cliff measured about 77 yards, the chord 200. This encampment being formed on an eminence, rising abruptly from Caldecot Level, I could easily trace, that the side towards the Level, had been once the shore; and that, therefore, the place occupied by the ramparts was a peninsula.

It is generally imagined that this entrenchment, in its present state, is not perfect, and that half of it has been destroyed by the sea, which has likewise carried
away

* Harris, in his account of this entrenchment, is extremely erroneous: he describes it as square, with the church standing in the middle. The word *square*, has induced many authors, who have never seen it, to consider it as Roman. Harris deserves applause for having first turned the public attention to the antiquities of Monmouthshire; but I am concerned to add, that I found many of his descriptions extremely inaccurate,

He is so much prepossessed with the idea of Roman antiquities, that he considers the most trifling and uncertain appearances as indications of Roman origin. I think it necessary to make this observation, because his accounts have been servilely copied by superficial writers. See Harris's account of the antiquities in Monmouthshire, in the *Archæologia*, Vol. 2.

away part of the church yard. It is likewise by many supposed to have been a maritime fortress, erected by the Romans to cover the landing of their troops, and their first station in Siluria; an opinion grounded on the erroneous description of Harris, and on the discovery of a single coin, struck by the city of Elaia in honour of the emperor Severus *. For notwithstanding repeated enquiries among the farmers and labourers of the vicinity, I could not learn that any coins or Roman antiquities had been found within the memory of the present generation. It has been also attributed to the British, Saxons, and Danes; but was occupied, if not constructed by Harold during his invasion of Gwent.

The picturesque ruins of the chapel stand on the outside of the great rampart, to the south-east next the sea: the building is wholly in the gothic style, and of very small dimensions. It now stands at the distance of half a mile from any habitation, but was probably, in former times, the chapel to a great and contiguous mansion; for we find that in the 12th century, John Southbrooke is mentioned, as being entitled to house-boot and hey-boot, from the Conquest, for his house at Southbrooke †. Within the memory of several persons now living, divine service was performed therein; and a labourer whom I met on the spot, assisted forty years ago as pall-bearer, and pointed out the half of a dilapidated grave stone, under which the corpse was interred.

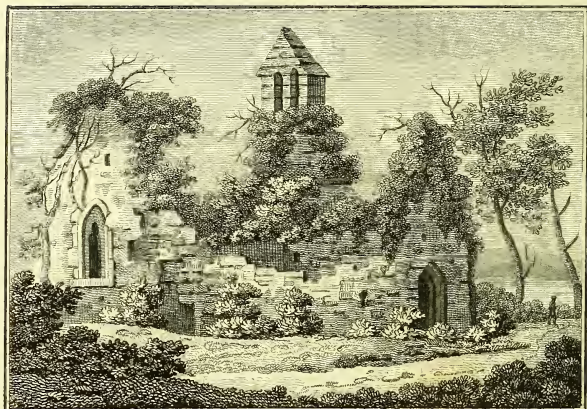
After indulging my curiosity at this place, I descended the rocky eminence into the marshy level of Caldecot, and walked to Portfcwit, now a village at the distance of a mile from the shore, but formerly washed by the sea, and probably

the

* "That this was a Roman work, the British bricks and Roman coins there found are most certain arguments; among which, the reverend father in God Francis, bishop of Landaff, by whose information I write this, imparted to me of his kindness one of the greatest pieces that I ever saw coined, of Corinthian copper, by the city of Elaia, in the lesser Asia, to the honour of the emperor Severus, with this Greek inscription. "ΑΥΤ. ΚΑΙ Α. ΣΕΠΤΙ. ΣΕΒΗΡΟΣ. ΠΕΡ. Ι. Ε. "The emperor Cæsar Lucius Septimus Severus Per-tinax;" and on the reverse, an horseman with a trophy erected before him, but the letters not legible, save under him, "ΕΛΑΙΑΝ," i. e. of the Elians;

which kind of great pieces the Italians call Medaglions, were extraordinary coins, not for common use, but coined by the emperors, either to be distributed by way of largess in triumphs, or to be sent for tokens to men well deserving, or else by free cities, to the glory and memory of good princes. What name this place anciently had, is hard to be found, but it seems to have been the port and landing place for Venta Silurum, which is but two miles from it."—Holland's translation of Camden, vol. 2. p. 485, quoted also by Gough.

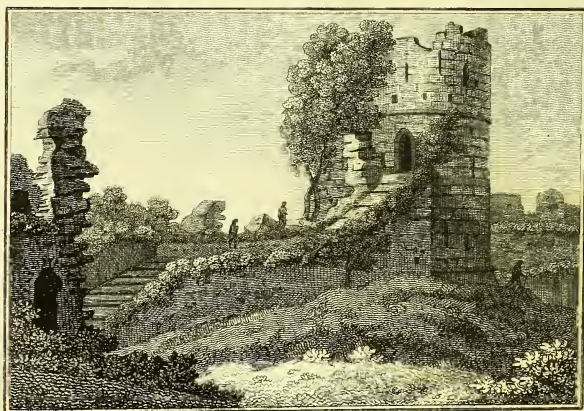
† Deed on the Chase of Wentwood. History of Monmouthshire, Appendix, p. 189.



R.H. del.

W.B. del.

SUDBROOK CHAPEL.



R.H. del.

W.B. del.

KEEP OF CALDICOT CASTLE.

Published March 1. 1800. by Gale & Dover, Strand.

the port to Caerwent : its name, Port is Coed, or the port under the wood, seems to corroborate this opinion *, and it is still further confirmed by the situation, as I evidently discerned that the sea once advanced as far as the village.

Caradoc in his history, translated by Powel, informs us, that Harold, after conquering part of South Wales from prince Gryffyth, built a magnificent house at this place, which he calls Portascyth in Monmouthshire ; “ and stowing it
“ with great quantity of provision, splendidly entertained the king, who honoured him with a visit. This was by no means pleasing to Tosty, to see his
“ younger brother in greater esteem and favour with the king than himself, and
“ having concealed his displeasure for a time, could not forbear at length but
“ discover his grievance ; for one day at Windsor, while Harold reached the cup
“ to king Edward, Tosty, ready to burst for envy, that his brother was so much
“ respected beyond himself, could not refrain to run furiously upon him, and
“ pulling him by the hair, dragged him to the ground ; for which unmannerly
“ action, the king forbid him the court. But he, with continued rancour and
“ malice, rides to Hereford, where Harold had many servants preparing an entertainment for the king, and setting upon them, with his followers, lopped off
“ the hands and legs of some, the arms and heads of others, and threw them into
“ the butts of wine and other liquors, which were put in for the king’s drinking,
“ and at his departure charged the servants to acquaint him, “ That of other
“ fresh meats he might carry with him what he pleased, but for sauce he should
“ find plenty ready provided for him.” For which barbarous offence, the king
“ pronounced a sentence of perpetual banishment upon him. But Caradoc ap
“ Gruffydh gave a finishing stroke to Harold’s house, and the king’s entertainment at Portascyth ; for coming thither shortly after Tosty’s departure, to be
“ revenged upon Harold, he killed all the workmen and labourers, with all the
“ servants he could find, and utterly defacing the building, carried away all the
“ costly materials, which with great charges and expence, had been brought
“ thither to beautify and adorn the structure †.”

The

* Others suppose, Portscwit to be a corruption of Welsh. Evans’s Specimens of Welsh Poetry.
Port Scewin, from Eſcewin, king of the West Saxons, † P. 97.
who is said to have landed his forces here to assail the

The ruins of Caldecot or Calceoyd * castle, stand at the extremity of marshy plains, called Caldecot Level, and are situated in the midst of a flat meadow to the north-east of the village, about a mile from the Bristol channel. From this low situation, they seemed at some distance a rude and unformed mass; but as we approached, assumed a more regular appearance; and in those parts where they were broken, and the yellow tints of the stone contrasted with the thick foliage of the ivy, were not deficient in picturesque effect.

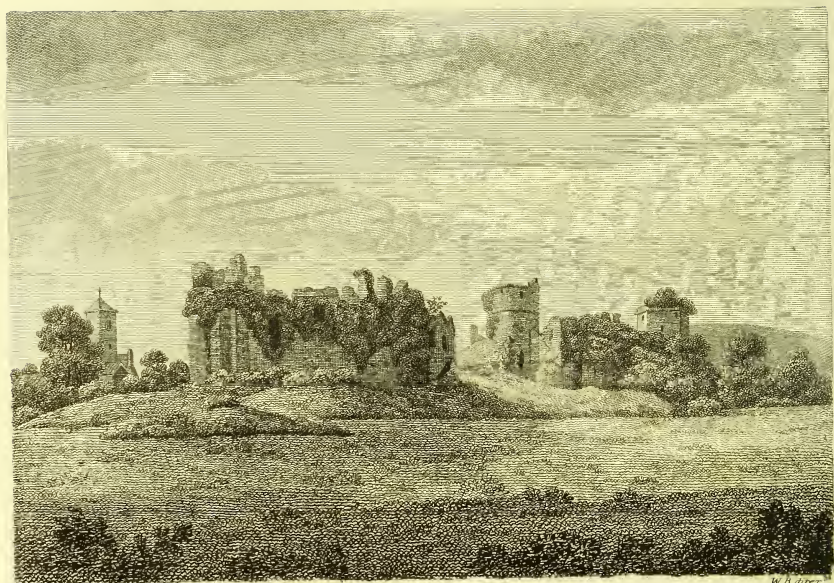
A ridge of land, probably once fortified, connects the western side of the castle with the village. The ground on the outside of the moat is quite marshy, and appears to have been overflowed, perhaps by the tide, so that the castle stood on a peninsula. This marshy plain is traversed by the brook Nedern, which flows from Caerwent, and winding round the eastern and southern sides of the castle, falls into the Severn at Caldecot Pill.

The castle is surrounded by a moat, and in its first appearance seems to be of a quadrangular shape, but is an irregular polygon. The area in its greatest length is 100 yards; it differs in breadth; the greatest width is 75 yards, and not more than 40 towards the eastern side, where the walls trend in a circular direction. The walls, the thickness of which varies from 5 to 9 feet, are formed with coarse materials, but the towers are faced with hewn grit stone, the masonry of which is extremely neat and compact.

The castle seems to have been constructed and repaired at different intervals, but on the whole bears a Norman character. The round tower, in the middle of the side fronting the village, was probably erected near the time of the conquest, for the doorway has a rounded arch; the other parts seem to be of a later date, as all the porches and windows are pointed, but of that species which was used not long after the introduction of what is called gothic architecture. The principal entrance is to the south west; it is a grand arched gateway, which was strengthened with two portcullises, and flanked with massive turrets, now so much covered with ivy, that the upper part is scarcely discernible. In the inside of the arch above, are round holes, formed for the purpose of pouring down hot lead or stones on the besiegers. The stone engroined roof of the porch is still remaining.

In

* A corruption, as Mr. Owen informs me, of Cil y Coed, or the skirt of the wood.



R.H. del.

W.B. duce.

SOUTH EAST VIEW OF CALDICOT CASTLE.

Published March 1. 1860. by Adell & Davies, Strand

In the towers on each side, are three oblong apartments with chimnies: opposite is another entrance, which is a hexagon tower, with a machicolated roof. A fally port, which is more pointed than the arch of the grand entrance, leads into the moat.

At the northern angle is a high round tower, on a mound of earth, encircled with a ditch; this was undoubtedly the keep or citadel, and seems to have communicated with all the towers, by means of galleries on the battlements. Another tower, at the southern angle, is almost dilapidated; it appears to have been of an oblong shape, terminating in a circular projection towards the moat, which was a favourite figure with the Saxon architects. To the east of this building is a large breach in the walls, which opens a prospect of the area, with the citadel rising in the back ground; from this point of view, sir Richard Hoare took the drawing of the annexed engraving.

Between this tower and the principal gateway, was probably the baronial hall, which we could trace by the ornamented gothic windows. The inside is much dilapidated, but foundations of buildings, projecting into the area, are still discoverable: in the lower parts of the north-east walls, are four fire-places, of no inelegant shape, which prove the existence of apartments on this side. On the back of one of these chimneys, I observed traces of the species of masonry called herring-bone, which was used in buildings of an early period.

The history of Caldecot castle is obscure, and I have been able to discover only scanty documents of its founders and proprietors. The ponderous style of the building, and the chinks and merlons, which are few in number, prove its antiquity: probably the most ancient part may have been the castle begun by Harold, and afterwards finished by the Normans, while they were engaged in subjugating and securing Gwent. This fortress was of considerable importance for the purpose of retaining in subjection the south eastern parts of Monmouthshire. It was early in the possession of the great family of Bohun. According to Dugdale, Humphrey, earl of Hereford *, the fifth of that line, did homage in 1221, and had

* Camden erroneously asserts, that the castle of Caldecot belonged to the constableship of England; but it appears to have been the private property of the great Bohun family, Earls of Hereford, and hereditary constables of England; from which circumstance this mistake of Camden is derived.

had livery of his castle of Caldecot, which was one of his father's possessions *; he was called the good earl of Hereford, and dying in 1275, was buried before the high altar in the abbey of Lanthony. Humphrey, his fifth descendant, died in 1373, leaving only two daughters; Eleanor, who espoused Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester, sixth son of Edward the Third; and Mary, the wife of Henry of Bolingbroke, afterwards Henry the fourth. Thomas of Woodstock obtained the earldom of Hereford, the constabship of England, and, among other possessions, the castle of Caldecot.

Probably the castle, on the attainder which preceded his assassination in 1397, was secured by the crown. Humphrey, his only son, was compelled to accompany the king to Ireland, and imprisoned in the castle of Trim. On the deposition of Richard the second, being released by the new sovereign, Henry the fourth, he either was shipwrecked as he was crossing into England, or perished by the pestilence in 1399.

On his death, without issue, his sister Anne became coheirs to the large possessions of the house of Bohun: she married Edmund earl of Stafford, the ancestor of the duke of Buckingham; who, according to Dugdale †, did homage in 1402 for his wife's inheritance, and died seized of Caldecot castle. He was slain at the battle of Shrewsbury, leaving an infant son, who became a ward to the crown.

Soon after the accession of Henry the fifth, the possessions of Humphrey de Bohun were divided, by act of parliament, between the king, as heir of his mother Mary, and Anne, countess Stafford, widow of the earl of Stafford, as heirs of Eleanor.

It appears from the partition roll of the estates of Humphrey de Bohun, in the archives of the duchy of Lancaster, that the castle of Caldecot was comprehended in the portion assigned to the crown §. On the attainder of Henry the sixth, it was transferred to Edward the fourth by act of parliament, who granted it, with many other possessions, in tail male, to William lord Herbert of Raglan, afterwards earl of Pembroke, for his great services against the house of Lancaster ||. The earl of Pembroke being slain at the battle of Banbury, it reverted to Henry the sixth,

* Dugdale, vol. 1. p. 180.

† Dugdale, art. Stafford.

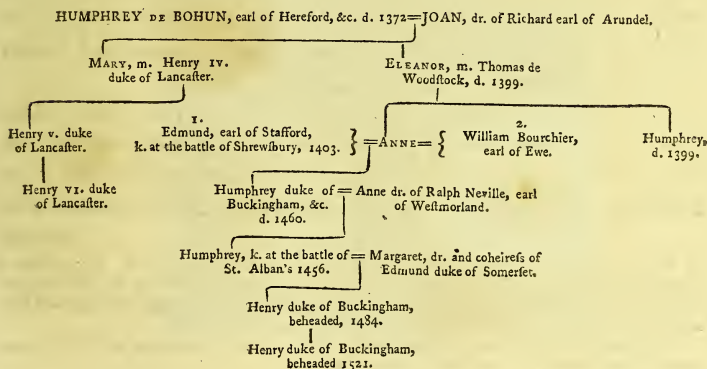
§ Archives of the duchy of Lancaster. Roll, 12
pres. 266. Dugdale, art. Stafford.

|| Archives of the duchy of Lancaster. Rot. 4.
Ed. 4 No. 22.

sixth, during his short-lived success, and was again resumed by Edward the fourth. Richard the third restored it, by act of parliament, to Henry duke of Buckingham, who had principally contributed to raise him to the throne: he was lineally descended from Anne, countess of Stafford, and in the bill, is styled "heir of blood to Humphry de Bohun, and rightful inheritor of all the manors, lordships, and lands, which were parcel of the inheritance, and chosen in part, by Henry the fifth, and which, on the attainder of Henry the sixth, would have reverted to the duke of Buckingham, if they had not been appropriated by act of parliament to Edward the fourth." Being, however, dissatisfied with Richard, and raising forces to support the title of the earl of Richmond to the crown, the duke of Buckingham was arrested and beheaded at Salisbury.

His son and successor Henry, being accused of plotting against the life of Henry the eighth, and aspiring to the crown, was, by the intrigues of cardinal Wolsey, sentenced to death, and beheaded in 1521. The parliament having in the en-

DESCENDANTS OF HUMPHREY DE BOHUN.



ing year passed an act for his attainder, his possessions were forfeited to the crown, and Caldecot castle was annexed by the king to the duchy of Lancaster*.

Since this period it has belonged to the duchy, and is, like the other estates, held by lease†. During the reigns of Elizabeth, James the first, and Charles the first, it was granted to the Earls of Worcester, at the annual rent of £. 52. 13s. 4d. In 1675, it was leased to William Wolfeley for sixty years, and soon after the expiration of that term to John Hanbury, Esq. of Pont y Pool; and is now held by his son Capel Hanbury Leigh, Esq.

The castle appears to have been long in a state of dilapidation; for at a court held in 1613, the jury state, “ they doe present, that there is an old antient “ castle in Caldicott, and that it is ruinous and decayed; that the cause of the “ decay thereof they cannot present, for it was before the memory of the jury, “ or any of them, by whom, or to what value they know not‡.”

Caldecot church is not unworthy of notice. It consists of a nave, a side aisle to the north, with a massive tower in the middle, and a chancel. The style of architecture is gothic: the nave is separated from the side aisle by five pointed arches on clustered piers; the windows are ornamented gothic, and contain several remains of painted glass, principally representing coats of arms.

The church is dedicated to St. Mary: on the outside of the wall, over the southern door, is a small figure of the Virgin in a niche; and in a recess in the wall, within the porch, is a headless recumbent figure in stone, which is called the image of the founder.

The living is a vicarage, and was formerly in the gift of the monks of Lanthony, to which it was probably granted, by one of their great benefactors, the earls of Hereford of the Bohun family. The patronage was some time in the possession of the Kemeys family, and now belongs to Mr. Johnson in virtue of his marriage

* For the account of Caldecot castle have been consulted, archives of the duchy of Lancaster; Dugdale, art. Bohun, Woodstock, Stafford, and Herbert; Edmonson's Heraldry, art. Constable of England.

† The *Campus* of Caldecot appears to have been granted by lease distinct from the castle, with the

warren of rabbits, birds, and fish. The first lease is dated in the time of Elizabeth, to John Vaughan; and it is stated to be within the Lordship of Kidwelly: Archives.

‡ Archives: Inquisition Com. Month, Tertia pars, No. 10.

marriage with the heiress. The tythes are singularly appropriated. The great tythes belong to Mr. Hill, and the vicarial are divided into seven unequal portions, of which six are appropriated to six lay vicars, and the seventh belongs to the incumbent.

The denomination of lay vicars applied to the persons to whom six portions of these tythes are appropriated, seems to denote the existence of a considerable religious house in this place. Neither Tanner or Dugdale take any notice of such an establishment; but the author of the Secret Memoirs of Monmouthshire, mentions a priory house at Caldecot in the reign of Charles the second, belonging to Sir Charles Kemys*, in whose descendants the patronage of the living was vested.

* Secret Memoirs of Monmouthshire, p. 120.



ENTRANCE OF CALDECOT CASTLE.

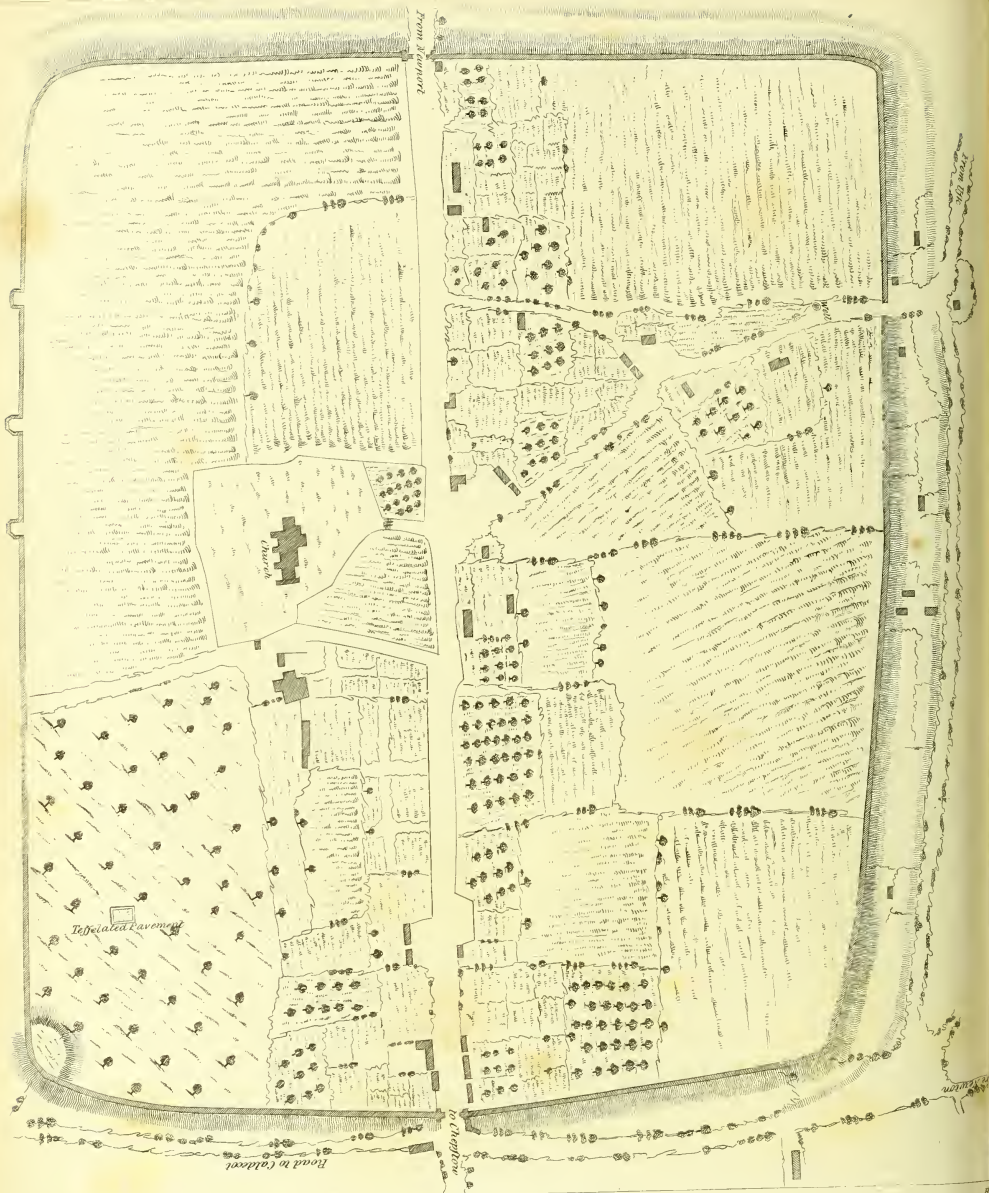
Published March 2nd 1841 by Collett & Davies, Strand.

CHAPTER 4.

Crick.—Caerwent.—Roman Antiquities,—Present State.—Dinham.

ON quitting the inn of the new passage, I rode through the village of Portscwit, leaving the church, a small gothic building, on the left, near which a transparent rill bursts from the ground with a considerable body of water, and after forming a large pool, runs into the Severn. Soon afterwards I came to the gate of St. Pierre, where the three roads unite, and continued along the highway leading to Newport and Caerdiff. In a little more than a mile, I passed through the neat village of Crick, from which place the road continues in a strait direction to Caerwent, and was undoubtedly the site of a Roman way. The foundations of the causeway are yet visible; and I am informed that this part is uncommonly compact and dry. I observed on the sides of the road in several places, large hewn stones, overgrown with the moss of centuries, which were probably employed in the construction of the old causeway.

A gentle rise leads to the eastern gate of Caerwent, the *Venta Silurum* of the Romans, now reduced to an inconsiderable village. It is situated on an eminence, sloping gradually into the plain. During several journies which I made through this place, I examined the few remains of Roman antiquities which still exist. Its shape is nearly an oblong parallelogram, of that kind which the Romans called *tertiata castra*; because two of the parallel sides were nearly one third longer than the others. The walls inclose an area of little more than a mile in circumference; the longer sides being 505 yards, and the shorter 390; the north side is curvilinear. The corners are rounded, according to a practice styled by writers on military architecture, *circinatio angulorum*: a method disapproved by Vitruvius, “*quia hostem magis tumentur quam civem*,” because they defend the enemy rather than the besieged. The position of the fortress is north-west and south-east, the angles being nearly in the direction of the four cardinal points.



The high road to Chepstow, which was the site of the Roman causeway, intersects it at right angles, and divides it nearly into two equal parts, passing through two openings, which were the eastern and western gates. The remains of the masonry at the eastern gate are still visible; and a stone, to which one of the hinges was attached, stands at the door of a public house, and is used as a stepping-stone for mounting horses.

I more than once made the circuit of the walls, which I was able to trace in every direction. All the sides, except the southern, are defended by a deep moat. The height of the walls appeared to be from 12 to 24 feet, though from their dilapidated state it cannot be exactly ascertained: the thickness at the bottom is 12 feet, and at top not less than 9. The southern wall is the most perfect, and for a considerable length almost entire; the western part of this side is strengthened with three pentagonal projections or bastions of stone.

The facings, which are still visible in many parts, are principally oblong pieces of limestone, occasionally intermixed with grit or sand stone. The inside is a composition of mortar*, rag stones, and pebbles. The places from which the facings have been taken shew the internal structure, presenting broken and angular pieces bedded in the mortar, and compacted by it into one solid body. The massive strength of this cement is proved by a large fragment, which has fallen from the south wall: it measures 20 feet in length, 12 in height, 9 in thickness, and, what is most remarkable, it appears to have revolved in its fall, and preserves, unbroken, the same position as when it formed part of the original structure. In tracing the circuit of the Roman fortress, the walls present a singular and diversified appearance. In some places they are mantled with ivy, in others their summits are fringed with shrubs, or capped with trees which start from the crevices, and overshadow the ruins with their pendent foliage.

Several remains of antiquities, particularly pedestals, and tessellated pavements, prove the splendor of the Roman station. Mr. Strange has given, in the *Archæologia*, an engraving of one which he discovered within the walls, about
the

* In making the Roman mortar, the sand was mingled with the stone, unrefined by the screen, and charged with all its gravel and pebbles. Irregular pieces of stone were placed in a kind of frame, and

over it was poured the boiling mortar, which pervaded the mass, and bound it into a strong and solid wall; it was then cased with hewn stone.

the distance of a hundred yards from the western entrance; this is now destroyed. Another mosaic pavement is still visible in a field at the south west angle: it was inclosed within a small building, which preserved it from destruction; but the roof having been taken down, it is hastening fast to decay. The form and general position are easily distinguished, but many of the tesserae are lost, and the colour of others much damaged.

On my last visit to Caerwent, the pavement was so much covered with weeds, that it may be said only to

“Live in description, and *look green* in song.”

I shall therefore present to the reader the accurate account of my friend Mr. Wyndham, who saw it when it was first discovered, and in its perfect state.

“The pavement is in length twenty-one feet six inches, and in breadth eighteen feet. A border, edged with the Greek scroll and fret, surrounds the whole, but on the north side this border, being upwards of three feet, is much broader than on the other side. This was designed, in order to reduce the circles within a square. These circles are about three feet in diameter, and are encircled with a variety of elegant ornaments, and separated from each other by regular and equal distances. I think there are thirteen of these circles. The pieces of which the pavement is composed are nearly square, the breadth of them being about the size of a narrow die. These are of various colours, blue, white, yellow, and red; the first and second are of stone, and the yellow and red are of terra cotta. By a judicious mixture of those colours, the whole pattern is as strongly described as it would have been in oil colours. The original level is perfectly preserved, and the whole composition is so elegant and well executed, that I think it has not been surpassed by any mosaic pavement that has been discovered on this, or even on the other side of the Alps. In my opinion it is equal to those beautiful pavements which are preserved in the palace of the king of Naples at Portice. I am strongly inclined to think, that it is of the same age with Agricola*.”

The field in which this mosaic pavement lies, contains several hillocks and mounds
of

* Archæologia.



EASTERN ENTRANCE OF CAERWENT.



T. Taylor del.

W.B. sculp.

BASTION OF THE SOUTH WALL.

Printed and Sold by G. B. & T. The Old Ground

of earth, which were evidently formed by foundations and ruins of old buildings. I understood, from several of the natives, that another much larger pavement had been discovered, but the proprietor conceiving that his ground would be injured by the excavations, ordered it to be closed. This field was probably the site of the prætorium. Towards its extremity, which is the southern angle of the fortress, is a mound or tumulus of earth, which might have been used both as an exploratory tower and as a means of defence.

In ploughing up the grounds and digging for foundations, numerous Roman coins are constantly found. I purchased a few; namely, a Faustina in silver; Antoninus Pius, Tetricus, Constantius, and Magnentius, in brass.

Venta Silurum is named in the 14th Itinerary of Antoninus, in the 11th of Richard, and by the monk of Ravenna; it is not mentioned by Ptolemy, whose account of the interior of Britain is extremely defective. From the size of the area, which is not inferior to that of Caerleon, and from the strength and height of the walls, it appears to have been a military station of great importance. According to the opinion of some authors, the walls were erected under the lower empire, because the Romans did not use turrets or flankers, like those of the fourth wall, before that æra; but it may be inferred, with equal probability, that the turrets were added since the construction of the original fortress. According to Richard of Cirencester, it was garrisoned by stipendiaries, and had been the capital of the Silures. I could not however trace, either on the spot or in the vicinity, the smallest vestiges of a British encampment. Probably the ancient residence of the Silures was demolished on the construction of the new fortresses, and the Roman station occupied the site of the British capital.

Some authors, without the smallest evidence, call it the seat of Arthur's government; others, no less erroneously, consider the walls as Saxon, without reflecting that the Saxons never had permanent possession of this part of the country till the time of Edward the Confessor. A native author likewise ridiculously asserts, that, "an academy for the instruction of arts and sciences was founded and erected here by one Tathy, a Briton; and supposed to be the first academy or university in the British dominions †."

In

* General Roy's Remarks on the Roman Stations in Scotland. p. 187.

† Secret Memoirs of Monmouthshire, p. 51.

In the middle ages, the name of *Caerwent* never occurs in the histories of Britain, and rarely in the Welsh chronicles, and it never seems to have sustained a siege, or withstood the predatory incursions of the Saxon or Norman invaders. The members of that branch of the illustrious family of *Clare* who were seated at *Chepstow*, are occasionally called lords of *Caerwent*; but it does not appear that it was possessed by the later proprietors of *Chepstow*. In subsequent times, the manor of *Caerwent* belonged to the family of *Langibby**; and in 1701, was conveyed to *John Jefferys, esq.* the ancestor of earl *Camden*. His son and heir sold it, in 1749, to the late admiral *Matthews*, and the present proprietor, *Colonel Wood of Piercefield*, purchased it from his son *William Matthews, esq. of Landaff*†.

The area of this once Roman fortress is laid out in fields and orchards, and contains, besides the church, the parsonage, and a single farm house, a few scattered cottages, built with the facings of the walls and ancient buildings. The number of souls amounts to no more than ninety.

The church, with its high embattled tower, is a conspicuous object from the adjacent parts; it is built principally with hewn stones, and other materials of Roman structures; and though at present much too extensive for the inhabitants, was once considerably larger. It consists of a tower, a nave, and a chancel; and had once two aisles, for the side walls still exhibit traces of arches and windows, now filled up. The doors and windows are gothic.

The view from the church yard is agreeable, and diversified with a pleasing intermixture of hill and dale; fields of corn and pasture are contrasted with the wildness of forest scenery, and the two oblong hills which rise above the ruined towers of the castle of *Lanvair*, form a principal feature in this delightful landscape.

I had a pleasant ride, by the side of the eastern wall, and over fields of corn and pasture, to *Dinham*, a small village, a mile and a half to the north of *Caerwent*. At this place was formerly a castle, which is mentioned by the author of the

Secret

2
* An act of parliament passed in the reign of William and Mary, empowering Sir John Williams to sell the manor of *Caerwent*, together with several other estates. From William Adams Williams, esq.

† From the title deeds, communicated by Colonel Wood.

Secret Memoirs of Monmouthshire, as one of the six castles which compassed the forest or chace of Wentwood. The village consists of a few cottages and two farm houses. Near one of these is an old barn, with several gothic doors, which appears to have been formerly a chapel.

The ruins of the castle stand on a gentle rise, near a road leading to Wentwood, and are so much overgrown with trees, as to be scarcely discernible in the midst of the forest. Nothing but a few dilapidated walls remain, from which neither the site of the ancient edifice, nor the foundation can be traced. This castle must have been long in a state of demolition, as it is neither mentioned by Leland or Camden, or any of his continuators. The ruins are called by the natives, the old chapel.

As I found nothing either in this place, or in the way, to engage my attention, I hastened back to Caerwent, and pursued my journey through the opening of the walls which once formed the western gate, gently descending to the brook which rises near Striguil castle, in the borders of Wentwood, and is here called the Nedern. I crossed it over a stone bridge, and followed the course of the Julia strata, vestiges of which I several times clearly discerned, particularly at the sixth mile stone, and in a field close to the present road, not far from a place which is called the four lanes, from the union of four roads, leading to Lanvair, Caldecot Level, Caerwent, and Penhow.

The road runs in a valley bounded by ridges of wooded hills, which converge near Penhow, and form a narrow pass, once commanded by the castle. Here I found a quiet and comfortable inn, the sign of the Rock and Fountain; where I occasionally took up my abode, and from whence I made several excursions into the neighbouring parts.

CHAPTER 5.

Castles of Penhow, Pencoed, Lanvair, and Striguil.—Bertholly House.—Views from the Pencamawr, and Kemeys Folly.

THE author of the Secret Memoirs of Monmouthshire informs us, “there were six castles that compass the forest or chase of Wentwood, as Dinham, Penhow, Pencoed, Lanvaches, Lanvaire, and Castrogry castles, the seats of, or belonging to some of the principal tenants of Wentwood, and within the purlieu and limits thereof*.” It is probable that most of these edifices were built by the family of Clare, who subdued this part of Monmouthshire, for the purpose of curbing the natives, a bold and spirited race, and of insuring their conquests by a chain of small fortresses, or castellated mansions.

Having already described the scanty remains of Dinham castle, and finding no traces of any ruins at Lanvaches, I shall give an account, in this chapter, of the four remaining castles, which were the subject of excursions from Penhow.

The castle of Penhow was the ancient possession of the illustrious Seymour family, or, as it is written in Camden and the early genealogists, St. Maur, from a place of that name in Normandy. This family came over to England about the time of the conquest, for in 1240, sir William Seymour, by the aid of Gilbert Marshal, earl of Pembroke, recovered from the Welsh Undy† and Penhow, and his family were settled at both those places‡. In 1270, sir William Seymour resided at this castle, and obtained the privilege of house-bote and hey-bote, as appertaining

* P. 54.

† Undy is situated in Caldecot Level, about five

miles from this place. No traces of the ancient mansion exist, but a few dilapidated walls.

‡ Camden.

appertaining to Penhow from the conquest. His son, sir Roger Seymour, knight, who was one of the jury summoned to Chepstow on that occasion, enjoyed the same privilege for his house at Undy, by the half of a vineyard which is at Magor, and of the fee of Undy*.

In the reign of Edward the second, the family was divided into two branches; the eldest brother, sir John Seymour, continued at Penhow, and the second, sir Roger Seymour, by his marriage with Cecilia, daughter and coheirefs of John de Beauchamp, baron of Hache, obtained large estates in Somersetshire, whither he removed, and became ancestor to the dukes of Somerset and Northumberland.

The branch which resided at Penhow, terminating without issue male, the castle came into the possession of the family of Bowlays or Bowles†, either by purchase, or marriage with the heiress‡. The family bore the arms of Seymour, and retained possession till the extinction of the male line, when a daughter conveyed the castle and manor to her husband, sir George Somerset of Badmington, in the county of Suffolk, knight, third son of Charles first earl of Worcester.

In 1694 it was purchased by the family of Lewis; and in 1714, the premises being seized for a debt to the crown, the castle, lordship, and estate, were sold to Edward Lloyd of Bristol, and now belong to Samuel Lloyd, esq. of Newbury, Berkshire.

The dimensions of the castle are small, and the present remains extremely insignificant. Part has been converted into a farm house: the remainder consists of a square tower with battlements, and some low walls of an irregular shape. The porches and door-ways are gothic. The masonry is indifferent, and chiefly composed of rubble stone plaistered.

The situation is wild and romantic. The castle stands on an eminence, rising on one side abruptly in the midst of a retired vale, thickly clothed with forests, and interspersed with occasional patches of arable land. It is so extremely sequestered

* Hist. of Monmouthshire.

† Collins calls it Bowlays. In a pedigree of the Vans, Edmund Van, who lived in the time of Henry the eighth, married Jane, daughter of sir Thomas Bowles of Penhow.

‡ According to Collins, Roger Seymour left a daughter, who married to a — Bowlays. According to

Edmonson, he died without issue. In that case, the family of Bowlays purchased the castle, which is not improbable, because, Collins says, "the earl of Hertford wrote a letter to sir John Thynne, desiring to be informed, to whom his grandfather had sold Seymour castle in Wales."

sequestered, that from some points of view, scarcely a single habitation is discerned.

The church, which is contiguous to the castle, is a small but ancient building, and was probably constructed not long after the conquest; but has been since so much altered and repaired as to become a motley mixture of different species of architecture. It is dedicated to St. John the Baptist*. In the time of Enderbie, the arms of the Seymour family were cut in stone, and depicted in the glass, but of these scarcely any remains are extant.

I have frequently had occasion to observe in Monmouthshire, monumental inscriptions of persons who lived to a very advanced age. This church contains an instance which ought not to be omitted. "Underneath lyeth the body of "Elizth Jamplin, daughter of the late Rev^d Will^m Williams, Rector of this "Parish, who departed this life July y^e 5th 1753, Aged 111 Years."

The castle of Pencoed † stands to the south of the high road leading from Chepstow to Newport, about two miles south west of Penhow, and five from Caerwent; it is situated at the extremity of a hilly and woody district, not far from Caldecot Level, commanding a delightful and extensive prospect of the Bristol channel, and the fertile eminences of Somersetshire and Gloucestershire.

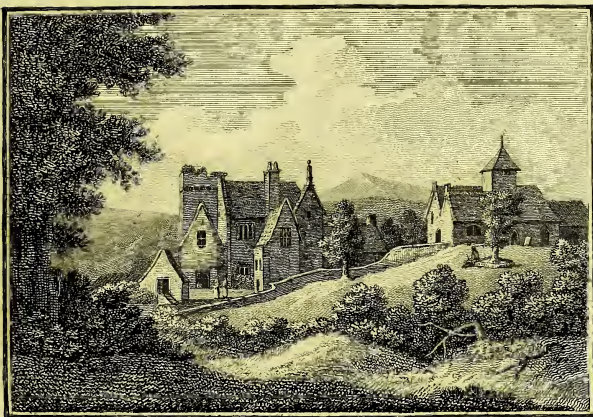
This castle appears to be the most ancient of these agrarian fortresses, and was probably constructed soon after the conquest. The principal remains are, a gateway with circular arches, flanked by two narrow pentagon turrets, a round embattled tower, and parts of the ancient wall. The gateway leads into the court yard of the mansion house, which was the area of the castle. Part of the mansion house is formed from the remains of the old castle, and part constructed at a more modern period; it is of considerable dimensions, and though much dilapidated, exhibits, in the size and height of the apartments, traces of former magnificence; the principal entrance is formed by an elegant gothic porch. It is now converted into a farm house.

In 1270, sir Richard Moore had a right, by charter, to house-bote and hey-bote to his house at Pencoed ‡. In the fifteenth century it was possessed by
a younger

* According to Enderbie and others, the church is dedicated to St. Maur.

† Pen y Cced, or the eminence of the woods.

‡ Deed on the chafe of Wentwood.

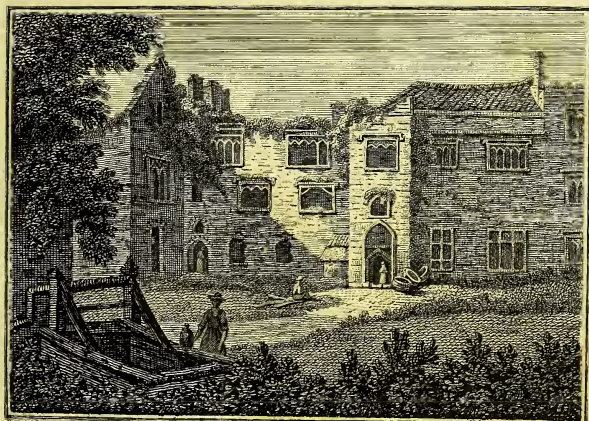


H. H. del.

PENHOW CASTLE AND CHURCH.

Published March 1800 by Gold & Davies, Strand.

W. B. sculp.



H. H. del.

MANSION OF PENCOED.

Published March 1800 by Gold & Davies, Strand.

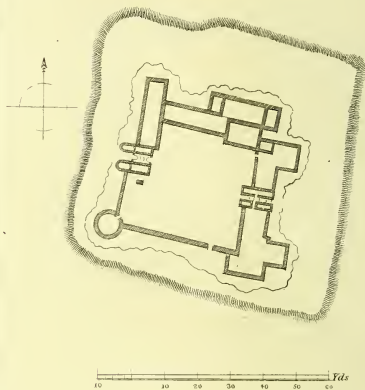
W. B. sculp.

Penhow

Castle



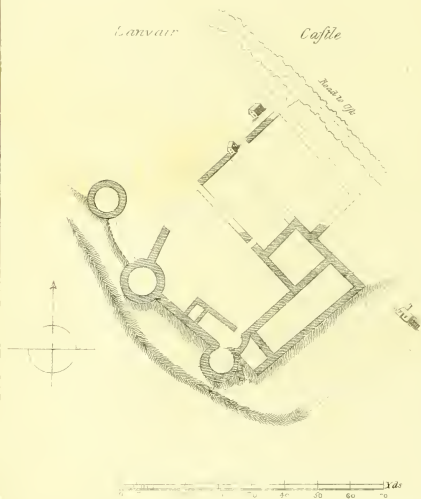
Pencood Castle



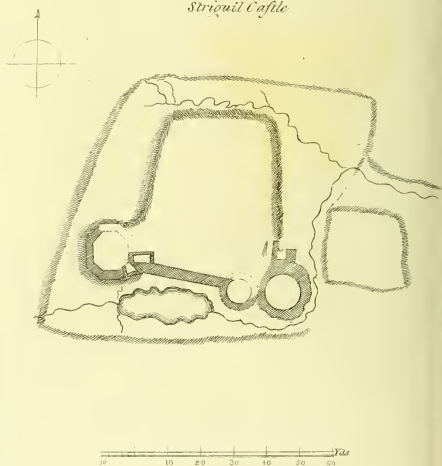
Llanfair

Castle

Road to Old



Strigoul Castle



a younger branch of the Morgans * of Tredegar, in whose family it seems to have continued until the beginning of the seventeenth century, when sir Walter Montague was the proprietor: he was sheriff of Monmouthshire in 1608, and by his will, dated 1614, left an estate to found an hospital for 10 or 12 poor persons, and £.10 a year to a clergyman for performing divine service at the chapel of Pencoed castle once a month. The hospital was founded, but no chaplain was ever provided; and the chapel is now in a state of dilapidation. After his death the castle seems to have again reverted to the Morgans, for in the Secret Memoirs of Monmouthshire, sir Edward Morgan is mentioned as one of the gentlemen of the county, who in the reign of Charles the first opposed the inclosure of the chase of Wentwood †. In 1648 he was buried in the chapel of Itton ‡. The castle was afterwards the possession of sir Rowland Gwynn, knight; by deeds, dated 27th and 28th of April 1701, he conveyed it to John Jeffreys, esq. whose son sold it, in 1749, to admiral Matthews§. It is now the property of colonel Wood of Piercefield, by recent purchase from John Matthews, esq. of Landaff. In a private cemetery of the parish church of Lan Martin, sir Walter Montague and his lady were buried, under a sumptuous tomb of alabaster: the roof having been taken down, the sepulchres are totally dilapidated, and scarcely any remains of the alabaster figures which reposed on the tomb are discernible.

Lanvair castle is situated about a mile and a half from Penhow, and two miles to the north-west of Caerwent, near the high road leading from the new passage to Ufk. The ruins occupy a gentle eminence above the church. The area which formed the principal

* In the reign of Edward the fourth, Morgan Jenkin Philip was possessor of Pencoed. He married Margaret, daughter of Thomas Scudamore of Kentchurch, and great grand-daughter of Owen Glendower. Memoirs of Owen Glendower, in the Supplement to *Mona Antiqua*, p. 77 & 78.

Leland says, "Morgan the Knight of Low Wentland, dwelling at Pencoite, a fair manor place, a mile from Byft, alias Bishopston, and two miles from the Severn sei. He is of a younger brother's house."

Enderbie, in his pedigree of the Morgans of Llan-tarnam, mentions a sir Thomas Morgan of Pencoyd, knight, who married Joan, daughter and heiress to

John Gwillim Herbert, of Itton, esq. And in the pedigree of the Morgans in the Cambrian register, sir Thomas Morgan of Pencoed is mentioned. Sir Morgan John of Tredegar, knight, married Mary, daughter of sir T. Morgan of Pencoed.

† Appendix, p. 94.

‡ In memoria viri venerabilis prenobilis et laudibus digni Edwardi Morgan de Pencoed, in comitatu Monmouthensis equitis aurati, qui obiit undecimo die Julii Anno Domini 1648. From a MS. in the possession of the Rev. Mr. Jones of the Pitill.

§ From the title deeds in the possession of Colonel Wood.

principal court, is a kitchen garden, and a part of the foundations is occupied by a small tenement, inhabited by the farmer who rents the estate.

The castle was once a large building, as is evident from the foundations, which may be traced to a considerable extent. The strength may be estimated from the thickness of the walls, which in no part is less than seven feet. The present remains consist of a square and round towers, almost dilapidated, several high walls, and a round tower of nine feet diameter; it stands at the south angle, and can only be entered by a ladder. A staircase on the side leads to the top, which was once provided with battlements, and commands a pleasing prospect of an undulating and woody country. The finest view of the ruins is to the south, where the round tower and the high broken walls exhibit a more magnificent appearance, than could be expected from a nearer approach. The view from the south-east, in a field called the warren, is more picturesque, presenting the round tower mantled with ivy, and some strait walls with several arched windows,

“ Bosom’d high in tufted trees.”

In 1270 Lanvair, or as it was then called Lanveire, was possessed by Sir Robert Pagan, knight, who was one of the jury summoned to the court of Strigoill or Chepstow, to determine who had a right of housebote and heybote in the forest of Wentwood, which he proved himself entitled to as proprietor of the castle of Lanvair from the time of the conquest*. It afterwards came to a branch of the ancient Kemeys family, by marriage with the heiress of the Pagans †, and was the seat of George ‡ Kemeys, who lived in the reign of James the first. Dying without issue, he bequeathed it to sir Nicholas Kemeys of Kevenmably, on the frontiers of Glamorganshire, who was created a baronet in 1642, and killed in defending Chepstow castle §. The daughter and heir of sir Charles Kemeys, his lineal descendant, conveyed it, with the other parts of the estate, to sir Charles Kemeys Tynte, of Halfewell in the county of Somerset. Major Halfewell married the sister of sir Charles Kemeys Tynte, and their only daughter espoused Mr. Johnson, to whom, in virtue of this connection, the castle and other estates now belong.

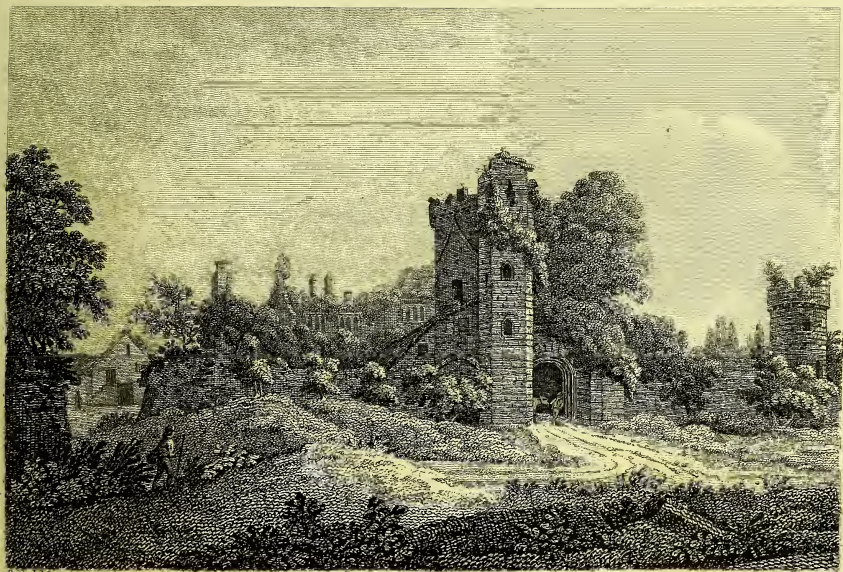
The

* Deed on the chase of Wentwood, quoted in the History of Monmouthshire, p. 187.

† Genealogy of the Kemeys family. Communicated by George Kemeys, esq. of Malpas.

‡ The portrait of George Kemeys is at Kevenmably.

§ Secret Memoirs of Monmouthshire.



THE CASTLE AND OLD MANSION OF PENCOED.

Published March 2, 1800, by Cadell & Davies, Strand.

The castle takes its name from the contiguous church, which is dedicated to St. Mary; *Lan-vair* in Welsh signifying "The church of Mary." It is also called *Lan-vair is Coed*, or "below the wood." The village is situated under two hills of an oblong shape, covered with heath and russet herbage, which make a conspicuous figure, and are seen at a considerable distance. The one is called *Mynwdd Llwyd*, or the Grey Hill, and the other *Allt yr Arfaid*, or Wolves' Cliff.

The road from *Lanvair* to *Striguil* castle leads up a steep ascent, through a wild and dreary district, thickly overspread with forest trees and underwood; and crosses the *Wentwood*, a large forest, remarkable in the history of *Monmouthshire*. It was once of very considerable extent, but is now more confined, and contains 2170 acres*. It is the property of the duke of Beaufort, and occasioned much controversy between his grace's ancestors and the gentlemen of the county, of which Rogers, in his *Secret Memoirs*, gives a circumstantial account, interspersed with many curious particulars relating to the history of *Monmouthshire*. It is still a continued tract of forest, and contains only a few cottages and the lodge.

Issuing from the deep gloom of this dreary and uninhabited district, I ascended to the summit of the eminence called the *Pencamawr* †, a high point of the elevated ridge which stretches from the *Treleg* hills through the midland district of *Monmouthshire*, and terminates near *Caerleon*. On reaching the height, a glorious prospect suddenly burst upon my view. From the midst of the forest scenery I looked down on the rich vales of *Monmouthshire*, watered by the limpid and winding *Urk*, dotted with numerous towns and villages, and bounded to the west by the long chain of hills which stretch from *Pont y Pool*, and terminate in the mass of mountains above *Abergavenny*. In this variegated landscape I caught the first glimpse of the *Sugar Loaf* and *Skyrrid*, which from their height and contrast, form the principal features in the prospects of this delightful country.

Slowly descending and enjoying the prospect before me, I reached, in about a quarter

* Map of the duke of Beaufort's estate.

† *Pen y cae mawr*, or the eminence of the great enclosure.

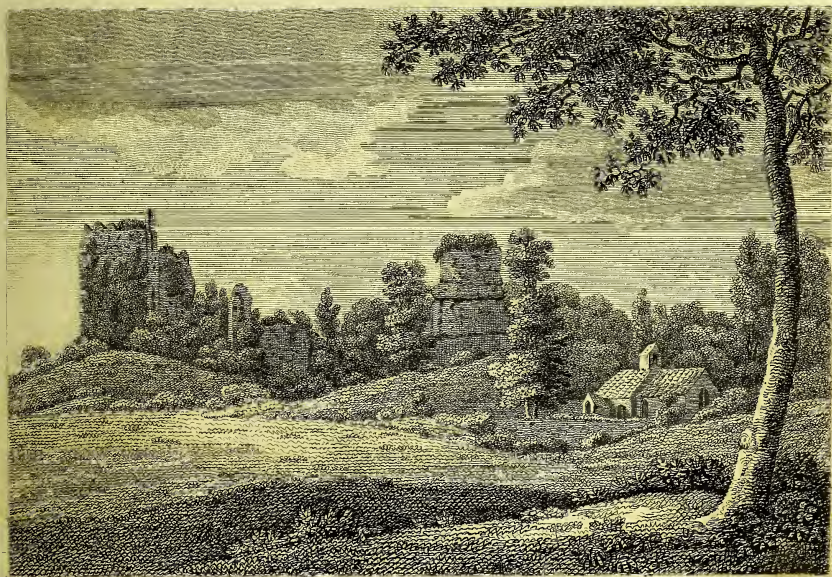
quarter of a mile, Striguil, or as it is called by the natives, Troggy castle; the ruins of which are situated in a flat and marshy field, a little distance to the right of the high road. The remains are so much dilapidated, and so thickly mantled with ivy, that their general form is not easily ascertained. They consist of part of a small octagon tower, and some walls with arched windows, from seven to eight feet thick, and neatly faced with hewn stone. The doorways are formed with pointed arches, and the windows, as far as could be judged from their present state, were likewise gothic. The surveyor, Mr. Morrice, who traced the foundations with great attention, found them nearly of an oblong shape, with vestiges of projecting towers at the southern angles. He discovered also traces of a broad moat, watered by two lively streams, that unite and form the brook which descends to Caerwent: it is here called Troggy, from the castle; and at Caerwent assumes the name of Nedern. Another little rill, which rises near the castle, and flows into the Usk, is sometimes denominated Troggy Usk.

Striguil castle is remarkable in the history of Monmouthshire, not from its size or strength, but from the general opinion that it was erected before the conquest, and gave the title of Striguil to a branch of the ancient family of Clare, once so powerful in these parts, the name of Strigulia to the adjacent region, and of Striguil to the castle and town of Chepstow. This opinion, first advanced by Leland and Camden, and adopted by some modern topographers, does not appear consonant to historical evidence, or local observation.

As I purpose enlarging upon this subject in the account of Chepstow castle, I shall only observe, that this castle was not anciently called Striguil, whereas Chepstow was distinguished at a very early period by that appellation. And as the gothic windows and doorways plainly prove an æra of construction posterior to the conquest, at which time Chepstow castle was erected*; it was probably a castellated mansion, built by Richard Strongbow, earl of Pembroke and Chepstow, or Striguil, and called Striguil from its founder. The style of architecture accords with the æra in which he lived, and no part is as old as the eastern and southern sides of Chepstow castle.

The

* Domesday Book.



RUINS OF LLANVAIR CASTLE.

Published March 11800 by Cadell & Davies, Strand.

The castle of Striguil belongs to the duke of Beaufort, and is erroneously supposed by many persons to give the title of baron to that illustrious family.

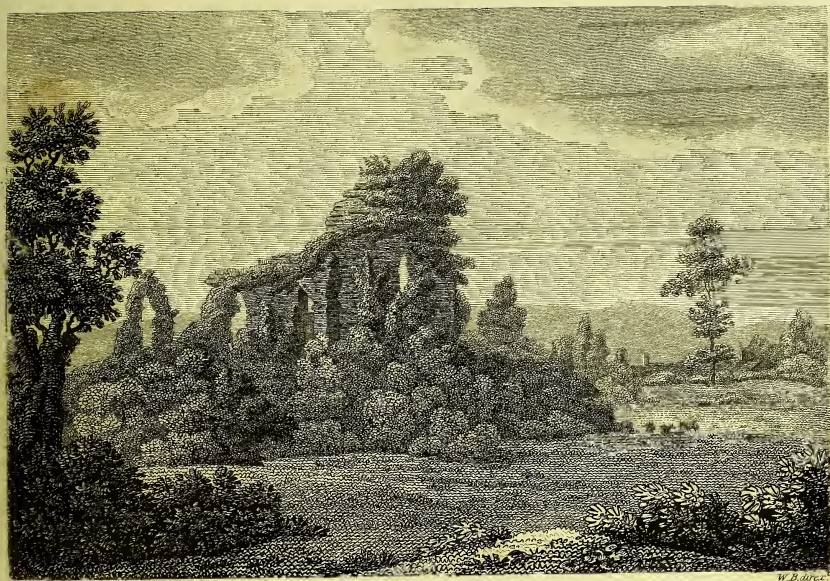
An abrupt descent leads from these ruins through an open forest to Bertholly house, which deserves to be visited for the extreme beauty of its situation. It stands on a gently rising ground, above the lower road leading from Caerleon to Usk, and commands a most delicious view of the fertile vale and the distant mountains. The lawn and adjacent grounds are richly clothed with hanging groves of ancient oaks; and below the Usk forms a curve, which is almost a complete circle. The irregular shape of the house well accords with the romantic scenery with which it is surrounded. I have seen few situations more pleasing and striking.

This house was an ancient seat of a branch of the Kemeys family, and came, by a marriage with the heiress, to a Mr. Gardenor, who assumed the name of Kemeys, and is since dead. The estate was mortgaged to Mr. Rigby to a very considerable amount, and has been appropriated by government for the liquidation of his arrears.

In a subsequent excursion, I rode from Striguil castle, along the ridge which stretches from the Pencamawr, and towers above Bertholly house, to the turnpike between Newport and Penhow. The road is a narrow level way, leading through groves of coppice, interspersed with oak, beech, and other timber trees. The height commands at one time, the same view which I so much admired on the top of the Pencamawr, and at another the southern parts of Monmouthshire, with the Bristol Channel, bordered by the hills of Somersetshire and Gloucestershire, till they are lost in the expanse of the ocean. The eye however is never fatiated with a profusion of objects, as the prospects on each side present themselves alternately, through occasional glades in the forest. About two miles from the Pencamawr I came to a field, in the midst of which, on an eminence, is a building denominated Kemeys' Folly, which comprehends a full prospect of the rich and extensive region on each side of the ridge. The delightful objects which had presented themselves, in succession, are here combined into one grand and sublime view, which is scarcely equalled in any other
part

part of Monmouthshire. I continued on this spot till the gleams of the setting sun no longer played upon the surface of the Usk, and the approach of darkness overclouded the scene. I then remounted my horse, and descending to the high road, returned to Penhow.

The transcendant beauty of the view, and the richness of the forest scenery, wholly engaged my attention, and I did not suspect that I was treading the site of an old British way, which was formerly the road from Cardiff to Monmouth. It passes along a chain of ancient encampments, and branches from the Julia Strata near Caerleon.



RUINS OF STRIGUEL CASTLE.

Published March 1860 by Collett & Davies, Strand.

CHAPTER 6.

Road to Newport.—Christchurch.—Excursion to Lanwern and Goldcliff.—Remains of the Priory.—Sea Walls.

FROM Penhow I continued along the turnpike road, and descended gently to Cat's Ash, a public house about four miles from Newport, and opposite to the rise that leads to Kemeys' Folly and the Pencamawr. From hence, I ascended, and pursued my course along a natural terrace, three miles in length, which commands a succession of prospects, much admired by travellers who pass this way into South Wales, because it first presents that mixture of the grand and beautiful which characterises the views of this delightful country. The rich vale of Usk, and the chain of hills commencing with the undulating eminences of Glamorganshire, and stretching in a continued ridge, majestic from its length and uniformity, till it terminates in the broken summits of the mountains near Abergavenny, are the same features, though differently grouped, which are seen from the Pencamawr. Here the flat and fertile levels of Caldecot and Wentloog, bordered by the Bristol Channel, are finely contrasted with the rugged mass of hills and mountains: the river Usk appears in singular beauty; on the north it winds along the wooded valley at the bottom of this elevated ridge by Caerleon and St. Julians, and after passing by the town of Newport re-appears to the south, and flowing in a serpentine course through the level plain of Wentloog, falls into the Bristol Channel.

In my way from Penhow to Newport, I stopped at Christchurch, which from its commanding situation and curious sepulchre, attracts the notice of the antiquary and tourist. It stands close to the high road on the brow of the eminence overhanging Caerleon, and between the two roads that descend to the bridge.

*

The

The church is a large building of rubble stone plastered, with a high square tower, and seems to have been built at different times, and frequently repaired. All the doors and windows are gothic, excepting the doorway of the southern entrance, which is half concealed by a gothic porch. It is formed by a circular arch, with low columns and hatched mouldings, similar to the Saxon and Norman style of architecture. The inside consists of a nave and two aisles, separated by elegant gothic arches, with a cross aisle, and a chancel, once closed by a gothic screen, much admired for the richness of the workmanship, and of which a few traces still remaining, excite regret for its destruction.

The church contains a curious sepulchral stone, on which are carved two rude whole length figures of a man and woman, with their arms folded, standing on each side of a cross. The inscription on the border is in Gothic characters, and though in some parts almost illegible, shews it to be the tomb of a man and his wife who died in the fourteenth century*. A superstitious belief prevails among the lower class of people in these parts, that sick children who touch this stone on the eve of the ascension, are miraculously cured. At that time, the children who are thus exposed, remain during the whole night in contact with some part of the stone. Mr. Strange, who has given in the *Archæologia*† a fac simile, relates, that in 1770, not less than sixteen were laid on it. But the custom is gradually falling into disuse, and the clerk informed me that only six or seven now make their appearance.

Near the church is a public house, built with oblong pieces of hewn stone, which were not improbably the facings of Roman edifices. It bears the appearance of a religious house, and was undoubtedly the ancient manse; for even now the vicar has a right to a room, to which there was an entry through a gothic arched doorway from the church yard.

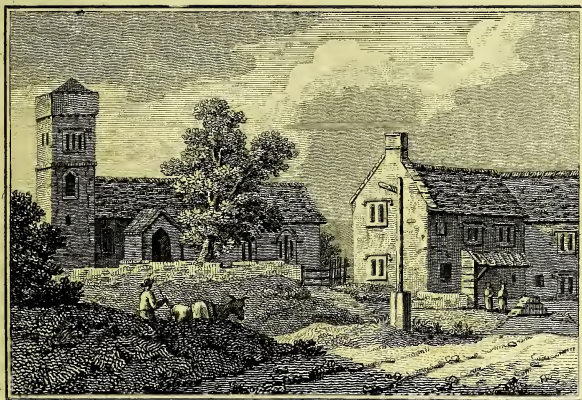
Christchurch was a vicarage in the patronage of Goldcliff priory, and is now in the gift of Eton college.

From

* Hic jacent Johannes

et Elizabetha uxor ejus qui obierunt anno domini M,CCC,LXXVI,
quorum animabus miseretur Deus. Amen.

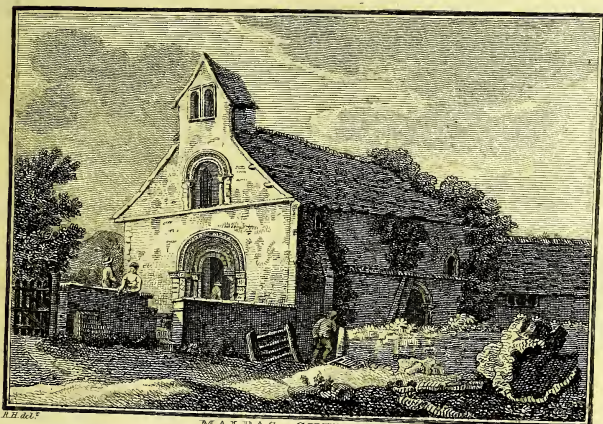
† Vol. 5, p. 75.



CHRIST CHURCH.

Published March 1, 1850, by Gidell & Davies, Strand.

W.B. Green



MALPAS CHURCH.

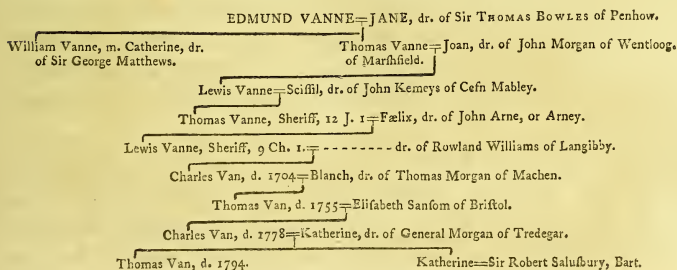
Published March 1, 1850, by Gidell & Davies, Strand.

W.B. Green

From Christchurch I made an excursion to Goldcliff, in the level of Caldecot. In the route I passed Lanwern, the seat of Sir Robert Salusbury, baronet, member of parliament for the town of Brecon. The estate formerly belonged to the ancient family of Welsh, and came by purchase into the possession of the Vans, who had long resided at Coldra house near Christchurch. From the authority of Griffith Hiraethog, a bard and genealogist of the sixteenth century, the original name of the family was de Anne, and Cornwall the place of their residence. In the reign of Edward the third, Robert de Anne settled in Glamorganshire. His descendant, Thomas Vanne, married Joan daughter of John Morgan of Wentloog, and was seated at Marshfield, in the reign of Elizabeth. His posterity appear to have been persons of property and consequence, as they intermarried with the families of Kemeys, Morgan, and Williams, and several of them were sheriffs for the county of Monmouth. Towards the middle of the last century, they were established at Coldra house, and removed to Lanwern about the beginning of the present. Charles Van, esq. the late proprietor, died in 1778, and left the estate and house of Lanwern to his eldest daughter Katherine, who espoused Sir Robert Salusbury.

Lanwern house was built by Charles Van, esq; the grandfather of lady Salusbury. It stands on a gentle eminence, overlooking on one side the uniform level of Caldecot, and on the other a succession of hill and dale, wildly mantled with underwood and forests.

PEDIGREE OF THE FAMILY OF VAN.



I am indebted to Sir Robert Salusbury for these communications. See also the Cambrian Register.

A little beyond Lanwern, I entered into the low district which is sometimes called The Moors, and sometimes Caldecot Level. It was once entirely overflowed by the sea, but has been drained and brought into a state of high cultivation. I rode for a considerable way along the side of a strait drain, which is called Monk-ditch, and came to Goldcliff, towards the north-western extremity of the level.

Goldcliff is a peninsulated rocky hill, about three quarters of a mile in circumference, rising abruptly on one side from the shore, and on the other gradually terminating in the plain: the part towards the sea is a perpendicular cliff of limestone, about sixty feet in height. This eminence is remarkable, because no other hill rises in the level between Caldecot and Newport, and because it is the only natural barrier to the depredations of the sea, in an extent of sixteen miles.

Giraldus Cambrensis derives its name from the gold colour which the stones reflect from the rays of the sun. Strange says, " It consists of many strata of
" limestone, disposed nearly in a horizontal direction, and parallel to each other;
" immediately under which is seen a bed of a hard reddish brown grit or sand-
" stone, full of yellow micæ, and which forms in appearance the base of the
" cliff. A considerable part of this bed continues from under the limestone
" rock along the shore, and the reflection of the rays of the sun, from its glitter-
" ing micaceous surface, produces the effect mentioned by Gyraldus, and which
" the neighbouring peasants, even at present, consider as probable signs of a gold
" mine. From hence the name given to this remarkable headland seems to
" derive its origin, in the same manner, as I imagine, the Mont D'or or Golden
" Mountain, near Lyons in France, and another of the same name a few leagues
" from Clermont, in the province of Auvergne, have been named, from the glit-
" tering micæ observable in an ordinary sort of granite of which these mountains
" are formed."

The ancient priory was situated on the brow of this singular cliff; and its history is thus traced by Tanner: " Robert de Chandos, A. D. 1113,
" founded the church of St. Mary Magdalene here, endowed it with several
" lands and possessions; and then, by the persuasion of K. Henry I. gave it to
" the

“ the abbey of Bec in Normandy, whence was to be sent hither a prior and
 “ twelve black monks. After the suppression of alien priories, Henry Beau-
 “ champ, duke of Warwick, obtained of K. Henry VI. the patronage of this
 “ priory, and leave to annex the same to the abbey of Tewkesbury; which
 “ being accordingly done, it was made a cell to that monastery, A. D. 1442,
 “ but three years after the Welshmen drove away hence the Tewkesbury prior
 “ and monks, who settled again here A. D. 1446. However, this priory was
 “ granted, 29 Hen. VI. to Eaton College; to Tewkesbury again, 1 Ed. IV.
 “ to Eaton again, 7 Ed. IV. which still hath it; and in the valuation of that
 “ college, 26 Hen. VIII. this priory is rated at £. 144. 8s. 1d. per annum*.”

The site of this once flourishing priory is now occupied by a farm house and a barn, which is placed on the highest part of the cliff. The only vestiges of the ancient structure are, a gothic doorway, and some stone walls which form part of the barn.

The present desolated state of Goldcliff, and of the environs, is very different from its former situation before the dissolution of the priory. It is by no means an improbable supposition, that the draining of Caldecot Level, and the construction of the sea walls, was owing to the exertions of the monks; a proof of which may be drawn from the name of Monk-ditch, still given to the principal drain.

Although the remains of Goldcliff priory furnish no object of curiosity to the traveller; yet he may be gratified with a view of the sea walls, that stretch along the shore for the space of several miles, and preserve the contiguous level from inundation. These dikes or walls extend from Caldecot almost the whole way to Goldcliff; they were formerly mounds of earth, but being subject to frequent dilapidation, and consequently incurring the expence of continual repairs, have been recently constructed with stone. These extensive dikes are kept in repair by the contributions of the proprietors of Caldecot Level, according to their respective proportions. The laws by which the expence is regulated, are similar to the ordinances of Henry de Bathe, a famous justice itinerant, who in the reign of Henry the third was commissioned to inquire into, and regulate the proportions

to be paid by the proprietors of Romney Marsh, in Kent*, towards the walls and banks. From these ordinances, the whole realm of England take directions in relation to the commissioners of the sewers, and to the jurors for regulating the expence of securing, rearing, and maintaining these artificial bounds to the ravages of the sea.

The Anglo Normans seem to have established themselves in Caldecot Level at an early period ; the names of the principal places, and the language of the inhabitants are English.

* Halsted's Kent, vol. 3. article Romney Marsh. See chapter on Wentloog Level for the commission of the sewers.



BRIDGE & CASTLE AT NEWPORT.

CHAPTER 7.

*Newport.—Bridge.—Situation.—Population.—Commerce.—Canal.—Castle.—History.
Proprietors.—Church of St. Woolos.—Anecdote on the construction of the Tower.—
Account of St. Woolos.—Caerau.—Ancient Religious Establishments.*

FROM Goldcliff I returned to Christchurch, and continuing along the high road to Newport, descended into the plain, and crossed the Uſk, over a new stone bridge of five arches, which has been lately constructed at the expense of the county, by Mr. David Edwards, son of the celebrated architect who constructed Pont i ty Pridd, near Caerphilly, in Glamorganshire. The span of the center arch is seventy feet, of the two adjoining sixty-two, and of the two outward fifty-five. In its present unfinished state, the sweep of the arches, unincumbered with a parapet, seems uncommonly light and bold. This elegant but temporary view is exhibited in the annexed engraving.

Before the erection of this structure, the only communication was by means of a timber bridge, similar to those of Chepstow and Caerleon, which was ill calculated to resist the height of the tide and the rapidity of the stream.

The usual height of the tide is thirty-six feet, but on some occasions it has risen to forty-two.

Newport, anciently called in Welsh Castell Newydd, or New Castle, is the capital of the hundred of Wentloog; its name is probably a mark of distinction from Caerleon, which, in early times, was the old port and the old castle.

Leland mentions Newport as a "Toun yn ruine" in the reign of Henry the eighth. Churchyard, whose descriptions, though couched in doggrel metre, I have always found exact, gives a truer picture of the town, which in almost every instance is applicable to its present appearance*.

It

* "A towne nere this, that buylt is all a length, "Which feate doth stand, for profite more than strength,
"Call'd Newpport now, there is full fayre to viewe; "A right strong bridge, is there of timber newe.

It is a long, narrow, and straggling town, built partly in a flat on the banks of the Uſk, and partly on a declivity. The ſtreets are dirty and ill paved; the houſes in general wear a gloomy appearance. By a charter, dated in the twenty-fiſt year of the reign of king James the fiſt, confirming former grants, it is incorporated, by the name of the mayor, aldermen, and burgeſſes of the borough of Newport, in the county of Monmouth. It is governed by a mayor and twelve aldermen, who are choſen from the burgeſſes, by the mayor and the majority of the aldermen: the election of the mayor is confirmed by the lord of the manor. An abſtract of this charter, communicated by Mr. William Morgan, town clerk, is inſerted in the Appendix.

Notwithſtanding its trade and ſituation, the population is very inconfiderable. It contains only 221 houſes and tenements, and 1087 ſouls.

Newport, in conjunction with Monmouth and Uſk, ſends one representative to parliament. The right of voting is veſted in the burgeſſes, inhabitants of the town, who are elected by the lord of the manor, the mayor, and aldermen.

As Newport is the only port in the ſouth-ſiſtern part of Monmouthſhire, the inhabitants are principally ſupported by foreign, coaſting, and inland trade. Being a creek of Caerdiff, the returns to the cuſtom-houſe are made under the head of Caerdiff, and therefore it is difficult to diſcriminate the veſſels which frequent each port. The only account which I have been able to obtain from the cuſtom-houſe, ſtates, that in 1792 twenty-two ſhips were regiſtered in the port of Caerdiff, and in 1798 not more than thirty†.

The coaſting trade is very conſiderable, and is chiefly carried on with Briſtol, in ſloops from twelve to ſixty tons each. The exports are principally coal, which in 1798 was ſhipped at 12*s.* 6*d.* per chaldron, and pig iron, together with bar iron,

“ A river runnes, full nere the caſtle wall :
 “ Nere church likewiſe, a mount behold you ſhall,
 “ Where ſea and land, to fight ſo plaine appeeres,
 “ That there men ſee, a part of five ſayre ſheires.
 “ As upward hye, aloft to mountain top,
 “ This market towne, is buylt in healthfull fort;
 “ So downeward loe, is many a marchant’s ſhop,
 “ And many ſayle, to Briſtowe from that port.
 “ Of auſcient tyme, a citie hath it bin,
 “ And in thoſe daies, the caſtle hard to win;

“ Which yet ſhewes ſayre, and is repayrd a parte,
 “ As things decayd, muſt needes be helpt by arte.
 Churchyard’s Worthines of Wales. p. 50.

† Total number of Ships, with their tonnage and men, regiſtered at the port of Caerdiff:

	Ships.	Tons.	Men.
In 1792 - - - -	22. - - - -	874. - - - -	76.
— 1798 - - - -	30. - - - -	1076. - - - -	97.

NEWPORT



Elevation of Newport Bridge

iron, bloomeries, and castings. The imports are shop goods, furniture, and a few other articles, sent up the canal for the consumption of the interior. The extent of this coasting trade may be collected from an account of the vessels, tonnage, and men, for five successive years, which was communicated from the custom-house, and is inserted in the Appendix. During this period, the average amount of the tonnage inwards is 9,734, and outwards 12,994. It is a pleasing satisfaction to add, that the war has had little influence on the coasting trade; the tonnage inwards has been increased, and outwards little diminished. The foreign trade likewise has been even augmented, for the tonnage registered in the port of Caerdiff in 1798, exceeded that of 1792 nearly one fourth.

The home trade has been considerably improved by the canal of Monmouthshire, which was begun in 1792, and finished in 1798.

This canal consists of two branches, which unite in the plain of Malpas. The first, or Crumlin branch, commences in the vale of the Ebwy, just above Crumlin bridge, and is carried from north to south, along the rising eminences parallel to the Ebwy, by Abercarn and Rifca, to a height called Cefn, where it runs south-east to Newport. The length of this branch is nearly 8 miles; the perpendicular fall of water 365 feet; and it is provided with 32 locks. The highest ground is between the Cefn and the junction of the two branches; within which space of a mile and a half there are 20 locks.

The second, or Pont y Pool branch, begins at Pont Newinydd, near Pont y Pool, and is eleven miles in length. The perpendicular fall of water is 447 feet, and the number of locks 42; the average depth $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet; the burden of the barges from 25 to 28 Tons*.

The principal commodities conveyed to Newport by this Canal, are pit coal, timber, and different sorts of iron, but principally pig iron, from the numerous founderies in the western mountains. The articles from Newport, are various kinds of shop goods, for the interior consumption, furniture, and deals. A more particular account of these exports and imports will be found in a list communicated

* Since the opening of the canal, the coal trade to Bridgewater has been very great, and Newport now rivals the more western ports in that market.

municated by Mr. Morgan Parry, agent for the canal, which is inserted in the Appendix.

A new canal from Brecknock now forming, which is intended to join the Monmouthshire canal near Pont y Pool, runs parallel to the right bank of the Uſk, from Brecknock to Lanfoſt, above Abergavenny, and from thence above Lannellen and Lanover, by Mamhilad to Pont y Moel. It is nearly finiſhed as far as the Clyda Forge, on the frontiers of Monmouthſhire. But the enormous expence of carrying it through a mountainous diſtrict, in which the excavations muſt be made to a great depth, renders it uncertain whether it will ever reach the place of its original deſtination.

Newport was once ſurrounded by walls, though no veſtiges at preſent remain. Three gates are mentioned by Leland * as exiſting in his time, of which the ſite of the eaſtern and western may ſtill be traced. The pivots belonging to the hinges of the eaſt gate, near the bridge, are diſcernible in the walls. The western, which was uſed as the town priſon, has been lately taken down; it was an ancient ſtructure in the gothic ſtyle, built of red grit ſtone, with a ſhield charged with a chevron on each façade †.

Near this gate, in the high ſtreet, is an old ſpacious building, with an ornamented front, and a coat of arms, carved in ſtone, over the door. This was called the murenger's houſe, an officer of great antiquity in fortified towns, who was appointed to ſuperintend the walls, and to collect a toll for the purpoſe of keeping them in repair. It appears, however, that as early as the reign of Edward the ſecond, the burgeſſes were exempted from this murage or wall toll ‡.

The apartments, which are converted into magazines, were ſpacious, and not inelegant for the early age in which the houſe was conſtructed. The windows are neat, and there are ſeveral gothic doorways and chimney-pieces.

The

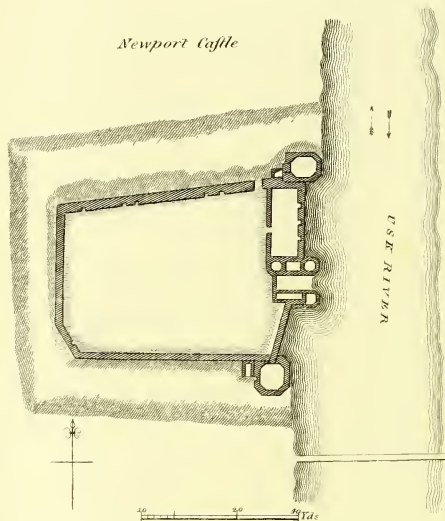
* " Ther is a great ſtone gate by the bridge, at the eſte ende of the toun, another yn the midle of the toun, as in the high ſtete to paſſe thorough, and the 3 at the weſt end of the toun, and hard without it is the parochie church." Leland's Itin. vol. 4. fol. 51.

† Theſe appear to be the arms of Ralph Stafford,

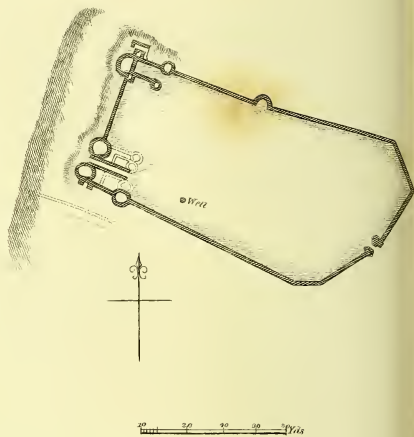
who in virtue of his marriage with Margaret, daughter and heiress of Hugh de Audeley, was Lord of Newport, who bore or, a chevron gules. Edmonſon's Heraldry, art. Chevron.

‡ Queen Elizabeth, in the 27th year of her reign, confirmed this and other exemptions granted by her predeceſſors. Deed communicated by Mr. Evans.

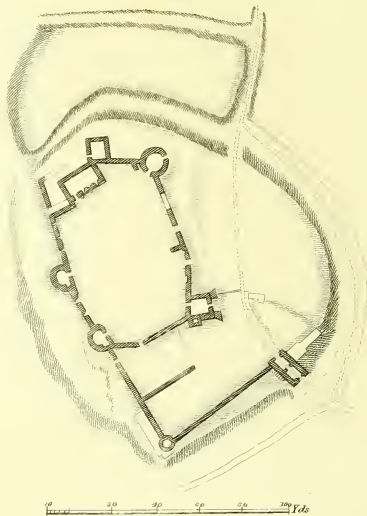
Newport Castle



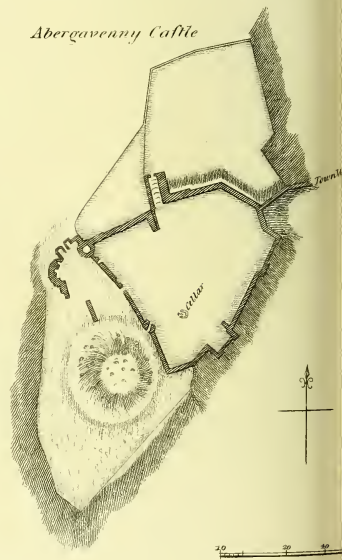
Langibby Castle



Ush Castle



Abergavenny Castle



The shell of the castle stands near the bridge, on the right bank of the Uik; it is a massive structure, but of small dimensions and simple form. The figure is nearly a right-angled parallelogram; it is built of rubble, but coigned with hewn stones.

In the middle of the side towards the water is a square tower, which seems to have been the keep or citadel, flanked with small turrets, and containing the remains of a spacious apartment called the state room, with a vaulted stone roof. Underneath is a sally-port leading to the river, with a beautiful gothic arch, once defended by a portcullis, the groove of which is still visible. At each extremity of this side are octagon towers, one of which, though much mutilated, is inhabited. To the left of the middle tower are the remains of the baronial hall, with a large fire-place; the windows are of the gothic species, and richly decorated. Evident vestiges of numerous apartments are seen in the area, and several chimneys appear in the side walls.

On the first examination of the castle, I concluded with Grose* that it was constructed solely for the purpose of defending the passage across the river; because on the side of the water it is provided with three strong towers, but towards the town has only a common wall, without flanks or defences. This mistake was corrected by my friend Mr. Evans: the castle was undoubtedly strengthened with a deep moat, which has been recently filled with the earth from the excavation of the canal, and by strong walls on the side of the town. There is likewise a considerable plot of ground, formerly called the Castle Green, but now converted into wharfs, which appears to have been joined to the fortress by means of a drawbridge.

The style of the architecture testifies that the present building is not so old as the conquest; for the arches of the doors and windows are pointed; it must, therefore, have been constructed during the Anglo-Norman period, when pointed arches were in common use.

The history of the castle corroborates this opinion. Newport † was originally included

* Grose's Antiquities.

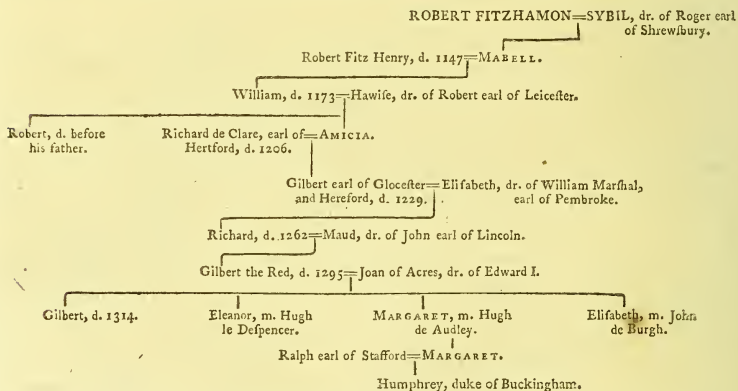
† Some authors have strangely confounded Newport in Pembrokeshire with Newport in Monmouth-

shire; and assert that the castle was built by Martin of Tyrome, lord of Kemeys, to whom William the conqueror also gave the custody of the place.

But

included within the lordship of Glamorgan, which comprised the country between the rivers Usk and Neath. In the reign of William Rufus, Robert Fitzhamon conquered Glamorgan from Jestin ap Gwrgan, and fixed his residence at Caerdiff. Being mortally wounded at the siege of Faleise in Normandy, he died in 1107 without issue male; and Maud his eldest daughter, conveyed Newport with his other possessions to her husband Robert earl of Gloucester and Bristol, natural son of Henry the first. He was equally eminent as a soldier and scholar; he was the most valiant captain of his time, and contributed by his prowess in arms to place his nephew Henry the second on the throne of England. He was the greatest supporter of literature of the age in which he flourished: he patronized William of Malmesbury, and to him Geoffrey

of



For his descendants, see p. 21.

But the lord of Kemeys here alluded to was the conqueror of Kemeys in Pembrokeshire; and the town, Aber Never, which likewise received from the Normans the name of Newport. See Leland, *Syllabus Antiquarum Dictionum*, art. Neveria et

Novum Castellum. Itin. vol. 9. Lamparde's Dictionary, art. Newport. History of Monmouthshire, p. 146. See also Cambrian Register, for an accurate genealogy of the immediate descendants of Martin of Tyrome. vol. 2. p. 125.

of Monmouth dedicated his history. He was likewise well skilled in military architecture; he built the castle of Bristol, and considerably enlarged that of Caerliff. Aware of the important situation of Newport, he probably constructed the castle to preserve his dominions from the attacks of the Welsh, who frequently wrested Caerleon from the Anglo-Normans. His son William succeeded to his honours and lands; and it is certain, from an anecdote recorded by Caradoc, that a castle at Newport existed in his time, and was strongly garrisoned; just before his death, in 1173, some of his troops, who were stationed in the castle, basely slew Owen ap Caradoc, when he was going to treat with king Henry, unarmed, and almost unattended, and under the faith of a safe conduct. Jorwerth ap Owen his father, in revenge for this cruel and treacherous murder, carried fire and sword to the gates of Hereford and Gloucester*.

The earl of Gloucester dying in 1173, without male issue, the next possessor of Newport castle was Richard de Clare, earl of Hertford, by a marriage with his second daughter Amicia. On the death of their son Gilbert, surnamed the Red, in 1313, his great property was divided among his three sisters; Eleanor, the wife of Hugh le Despenser the younger, minion of Edward the second, Margaret, who married Hugh de Audley, and Elisabeth, who espoused John de Burgh, son to Richard earl of Ulster.

Margaret obtained the castle and town of Newport, but was compelled to cede them to Hugh le Despenser, who procured from the king a charter of privileges for the burgeses and inhabitants of his town of Newport.

On the fall of Despenser, Newport was restored to Hugh de Audley, and conveyed by Margaret, his only daughter and heir, to her husband Ralph earl of Stafford, who performed great military services during the warlike reign of Edward the third, and was in high favour with the king. On the invasion of France, in 1346, he greatly distinguished himself; he bravely defended Aiguillon, besieged by John, dauphin of France, and had an eminent command at the celebrated battle of Cressy, in the van of the army, under the black prince. For

his

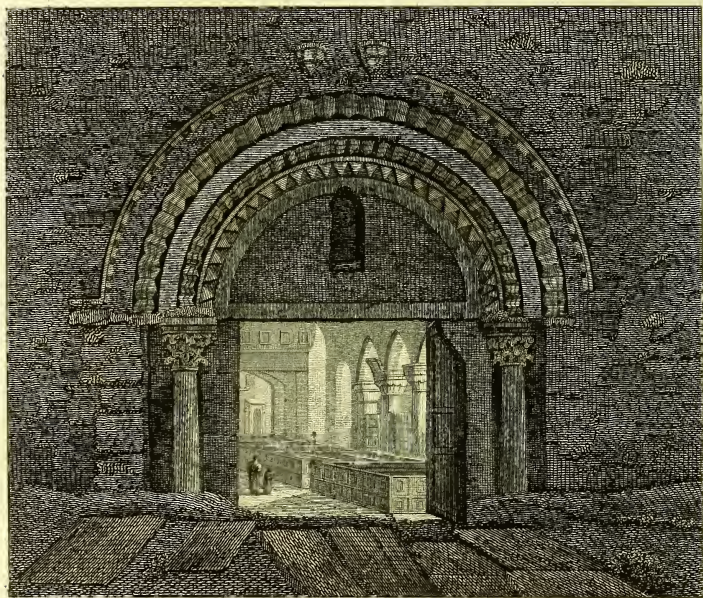
* Powell's History of Wales, p. 200.

his great services he was created earl of Hereford, and the king's lieutenant and captain general of the duchy of Aquitain, "with special commission to treat with any persons upon terms of aid to the king, and mutual assistance from him." In this service sixty men with lances were impressed out of his lordships of *Newport* and *Netherwent* in the marches of Wales.

Newport town and castle, together with the lordship of Wentloog, continued in the possession of his family until the execution and attainder of his fourth descendant, Edward, third duke of Buckingham; when the castle and lordship were seized by Henry the eighth *. The castle was afterwards sold or granted to the Herberts of St. Julian's, and formed part of the property which lord Herbert of Cherbury obtained by his marriage with Mary, only daughter and heiress of sir William Herbert. It came in the same manner as the estate of St. Julian's to the late earl of Powis, and was sold to Charles Van, esq. of Lanwern. Mr. Van granted, by a long lease, the tower next to the bridge to the Rev. Mr. Burgh, whose father had purchased the manor of Newport, and exchanged the remainder of the castle with William Kemeys, esq. of Mayndee, the present proprietor. The above mentioned tower, and the adjacent parts between it and the bridge, together with the manor of Newport, descended to the daughter of Mr. Burgh, and first wife of Thomas Johnes, esq. member of parliament for Cardiganshire, from whom they have been recently purchased by the marquis of Worcester.

The church of St. Woolos, which is the only place for the established worship in Newport, stands on the outskirts of the town, on a gentle rise, commanding an extensive view, which is much admired by travellers. The original structure is the present nave, and was erected either in the Anglo Saxon or Norman æra; but has since undergone many alterations and additions. The church consists of a square tower or belfry; a small chapel dedicated to St. Mary, which is now used as a burial place; a nave, with two aisles, and a chancel. The present entrance is on the south, through a gothic porch; but

* See Dugdale's Baronage, art. Fitzhamon, Gloucester, Clare, Audley, Stafford. Leland's Itinerary, vol. 5. fol. 6. Gough's Camden.



Jr. Rich. Moore Bar. del.

W. Byrne sculp.

INSIDE VIEW OF THE CHURCH OF ST. WOLLOS AT NEWPORT.

Published March 1. 1800 by Cadell & Davies, Strand.

but the western doorway, leading from St. Mary's chapel into the church, was originally the grand entrance. It is formed by a femicircular arch, richly ornamented with hatched mouldings, and reposing on low columns, with rude capitals of foliage: it has a Saxon character. In the inside of the church the doors and windows are gothic, of different ages; but the nave is separated on each side from the aisles, by five circular arches*, resting on four massive columns, and two pentagon half columns at each extremity, which, from their structure and appearance, are evidently Saxon or Norman. A few remains of painted glass are still visible in some of the windows.

In the church are three ancient monuments much dilapidated. One in the nave, of alabaster, consists of two headless figures of a man in armour and a woman. The two others are in the chancel; one of these, on the floor, is a recumbent effigies of a woman in stone, probably as old as the fourteenth century, without an inscription; the other is a magnificent sepulchre in carved stone, with a rich arched canopy, supported by fluted ionic pillars, under which are the mutilated remains of the effigies of a man in armour, reposing on a helmet, with a ruff. From the costume and style of the ornaments it appears to have been constructed in the sixteenth century; but as there is no inscription or tradition extant, the person here buried is unknown.

Among the modern sepulchral tablets are those of the three last vicars:

Francis Pettinghall, who died 1726,

Samuel Butcher, - - - 1753, and

Thomas Mills Hoare, - 1783.

There is likewise a cenotaph erected to the memory of Mr. Pratt, one of the principal promoters of the great iron works at Blaenafon †.

The

* One gothic arch is at the north-eastern extremity of the colonnade next the chancel, which is evidently posterior to the original colonnade.

† This Cenotaph
is
Sacred to the Memory
of
Benjamin Pratt, Esq.
of

Great Whitley, in Worcestershire,
who died at Blaenafon,
in this County,
May 24th, 1794,
aged 52 Years;
and lies interred at Chaddestrey

The tower was built by Henry the third on the following occasion. Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, lord of Glamorgan, and possessor of Newport castle, one of the most powerful barons in the kingdom, leagued with Simon Montfort, earl of Leicester, against Henry the third; and by means of his great connections and interest, brought a powerful accession of strength to the opponents of the king. He was highly instrumental in gaining the battle of Lewes, which terminated in the immediate capture of Henry, in the subsequent surrender of prince Edward, and in the establishment of the baronial confederacy.

But the earl of Gloucester, dissatisfied with the ambitious proceedings of Leicester, seceded from his party; and having retired for safety to his estates on the borders of Wales, contrived the escape of prince Edward, and prepared to join him with a considerable army. Meanwhile Leicester marched from Hereford to Monmouth; but being opposed by the militia, he was compelled to retreat to Usk, a place belonging to the earl of Gloucester, which he took; being driven from thence by Gloucester, he proceeded to Newport, and occupying the castle, sent for vessels to convey him and his army to Bristol. Gloucester receiving information of this design, placed three galleys at the mouth of the Usk, which sunk or dispersed the boats, and marching with prince Edward to the bridge, succeeded in driving back Leicester's troops, who in retreating set fire to the bridge, and afterwards retired to Hereford. The victory gained by prince Edward and Gloucester over the rebels at Evesham, the death of Leicester, with the delivery of the king from captivity, dissolved the confederacy of the barons, and restored the royal authority.

§

in Worcestershire.
A Native of this Country,
though removed from it
in early Life,
he cherished its Remembrance
with lively Regard,
and his last Years were successfully
employed
in contributing to its Prosperity.
He was principally concerned
in establishing
the Iron Works at Blaenafon

Henry,
and its Vicinity,
and was a warm Promoter
of the Monmouthshire Canal.
Soundness of Judgment,
Rectitude of Principle, and Urbanity of Manners,
eminently conspired to form
in him
the Man of Business and the Gentleman.
He died with that pious Fortitude,
which manifested in his last Moments
that he was at peace
with his God.

Henry, not unmindful of the loyal conduct of the inhabitants, and their vigorous opposition to the earl of Leicester, built the tower of the church, as a testimony of his gratitude. His statue is placed in a niche in the western front; but the head was struck off by the soldiers of Cromwell.

St. Woolos, to whom the church is dedicated, is called in Welsh Gwnlliw, in latin Gunleus; his legend is thus related in the lives of the saints: "St. Gunleus C. This saint, who was formerly honoured with great devotions in Wales, was eldest son to a king of the Dimetians in South Wales. After the death of his father, he divided the kingdom with six brothers, who nevertheless respected and obeyed him as if he had been their sovereign. He married Gladufa daughter of Braghan, prince of that country, which is called from him Brecknockshire, and had by her St. Kenna, and the great St. Cadoc, who afterwards founded the famous monastery of Llancarvan, near Cowbridge in Glamorganshire. Gunleus lived so as to have always in view the heavenly kingdom, for which we are created by God. He retired wholly from the world long before his death, and passed his time in a solitary little dwelling, near a church which he had built. His cloathing was sackcloth, his food barley bread, upon which he usually strewed ashes, and his drink was water. Prayer and contemplation were his constant occupation, to which he rose at midnight, and he subsisted by the labour of his hands; thus he lived many years. Some days before his death he sent for St. Dubritius and his son St. Cadoc, and by their assistance, and the holy rites of the church, prepared himself for his passage to eternity. He departed to our Lord toward the end of the fifth century, and was glorified by miracles *."

Near the church was a barrow called Twyn Gwnlliw, or the tomb of St. Woolos; but which Harris in his account of the antiquities of Newport supposes to have been an *arx speculatoria*, or watch tower, which the Romans always constructed near their camps. This opinion is in some measure corroborated by the vestiges of ancient encampments in the vicinity of the church yard, and by the names of Cyningaer and Caerau, by which some neighbouring spots are distinguished.

The

* Lives of the Fathers, principal Martyrs, and other principal Saints, vol. 3, p. 313.

The traveller who is fond of prospects will ascend the tower of the church ; he will admire on one side the course of the Usk, bending in the true line of beauty, and washing the castle and town of Newport, and on the other the rich levels of Caldecot and Wentloog, from Magor to the Rumney, the Bristol channel, and the distant hills of Gloucestershire and Somersetshire.

During my frequent visits to Newport, I received great marks of attention and friendship from the Rev. Mr. Evans, vicar of St. Woolos, and passed much of my time at Caerau, the place of his residence, which is delightfully situated in the midst of the fields, about a mile from the town, and not far from the high road to Bassaleg. The view from the house is uncommonly pleasing ; it looks down upon the town of Newport and the winding Usk, skirted by gentle and fertile eminences, and backed by a chain of hills ; in the foreground the western side of the tower of St. Woolos church forms an agreeable object. I scarcely made a single excursion in the vicinity of Newport, in which I was not accompanied by Mr. Evans, and derived the greatest advantage from his knowledge of the Welsh tongue, local information, and historical acquaintance with the ancient state of the country. I have, in another place, acknowledged the benefit which I received from his kind assistance and indefatigable exertions ; but in describing the environs of Newport, I could not avoid mentioning the sequestered and hospitable retreat of my ingenious and much esteemed friend.

Leland mentions a house of religion in Newport "by the quay beneath the bridge," and Tanner supposes that it was probably of friars preachers, because such a one was granted at the dissolution to sir Edward Carn *. The remains of this friary still exist, near the banks of the Usk, below the bridge. They consist of several detached buildings containing comfortable apartments, and a spacious hall, with gothic windows, neatly finished in free stone ; the body of the church is dilapidated ; but the northern transept is a small and elegant specimen of gothic architecture. It is now occupied by a cyder mill, and the press is placed in a small recess which was once a chapel, separated from the transept by a bold and lofty arch. The gardens are enclosed within the original walls.

There

* Probably a mistake for sir Edward Morgan of Lantarnam, as the site still belongs to his descendants.

There was another religious house for white friars, near the church of St. Woolos, on the left of the lower road leading to Tredegar; it stood on a gentle rise overlooking the level of Wentloog, and commanding a beautiful view of the Usk, hastening to fall into the Severn. No vestiges at present exist, and a private house occupies the original site, which in memorial of its ancient state, is still called the Friars.

The environs of Newport are delightful, and compensate for its gloomy appearance. I was particularly struck with the beauty of the scenery in a meadow to the north-west of the town. As I took my evening walks on the banks of the river towards the bridge, I was never fatigued with admiring the rapid and silvery Usk, the ponderous remains of the ancient castle, the bold projection of the bridge, and the elegant tower of St. Woolos church crowning the summit which rises above the town. This meadow is surrounded by a circular range of gentle hills, richly clothed with an intermixture of wood and pasture; and at a distance is seen the strait ridge of mountains, which stretch from Risca towards Pont y Pool, and present a beautiful appearance when purpled with the rays of the setting sun.



STWOLOS CHURCH

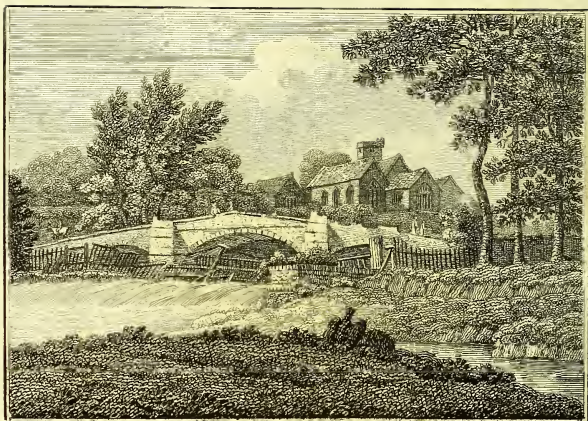
CHAPTER 8.

Excursions from Newport to the South-western Boundaries of Monmouthshire.—Upper Road to Caerdiff.—Encampment of the Gaer.—Bassaleg.—Craig y Saeffon.—New Park Encampment.—Lanvihangel Vedw.—Kevenmably.—St. Melons.—Rumney.—Lower Road from Caerdiff to Newport.—Castleton.—Tredegar.—Morgan Family.—Machen Place and Church.—Bedwas.

I MADE several excursions to the south-western boundaries of Monmouthshire, in the course of which I examined three old encampments contiguous to the road, and visited the seats of the Morgan family, justly esteemed one of the most ancient and illustrious of the county.

Quitting Caerau, in company with Mr. Evans, we followed the upper road to Caerdiff, at the second mile-stone entered the old park of Tredegar, and gently ascended to the Gaer, an ancient encampment, on the brow of the eminence above the river Ebwy. The remains are perfect, and as they are wholly free from under-wood, may be traced without difficulty. The annexed plan will exhibit the form, which though not exactly square or oblong, seems to bear a Roman character, as it resembles the shape of the Gaer near Brecknock, and some other encampments exhibited in Stukely's Itinerary, which are allowed to be Roman.

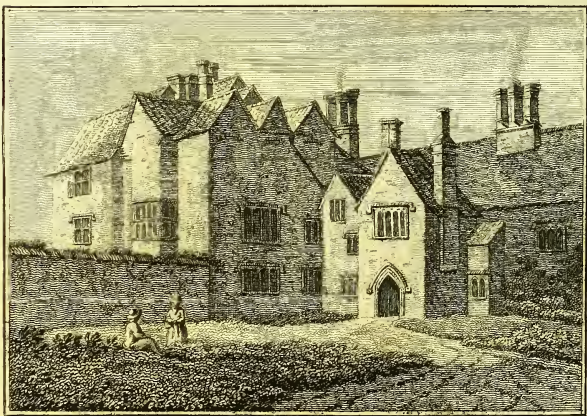
Returning into the high road, we crossed the Ebwy, which is here a mountain torrent, over a stone bridge, to Bassaleg, a small village, and the parochial church of Tredegar. According to Tanner, Bassaleg was formerly a Benedictine priory of black monks, a cell of the abbey of Glastonbury, to which the church was given by Robert de Haye and Gundreda his wife, between 1101 and 1120. This cell, which was dedicated to St. Basil, seems to have gone to decay before the general dissolution of religious houses: "The monks," he observes, "were probably



R. H. del.

W. B. del.

BASSALEG.



R. H. del.

W. B. del.

MACHEN PLACE.

Published March 1. 1840 by Cadell & Davies Strand.

“ soon recalled to Glastonbury, for abbot Michael, who attained that dignity “ in 1235, let to farm the church of Bafflech, which seems a convincing proof “ that there were no longer any of their own convent resident here.”

No remains of the ancient priory exist at Bassaleg; there is, however, a ruined building at the distance of about a mile, in the midst of a deep sequestered forest, not far from the Rumney, on the confines of Machen parish, which is by some supposed to be part of the original cell. The name of this forest, still called Coed y Monachty, or the Wood of the Monastery, seems to confirm this opinion. The present church is a neat gothic building, and either belonged to the cell, or was named from it, as it is likewise dedicated to St. Basil, from which the village takes its name. A few years ago it was repaired, and so much altered, that the inside bears no traces of the original style.

It appears from the sepulchral inscriptions, that the collateral branches of the Morgan family, seated at Gwern y Cleppa and Rogeston castle, were buried in this church. Jane, eldest sister and heiress of the late John Morgan, esq. of Tredegar, the wife of sir Charles Gold Morgan, is interred in a cemetery lately erected by her husband, who has transferred the burial place of the Tredegar family from Machen to this church.

A small gothic edifice, now a school-room, stands a few paces from the south side of the church, and was probably an ancient chapel.

The point of view from which the church and chapel are seen to the greatest advantage, is on the opposite side of the bridge in Tredegar park, where the bridge, the chapel, and the embattled tower of the church, grouped in a pleasing manner, and reflected in the torrent beneath, have an agreeable and singular effect.

About a mile from Bassaleg, and a quarter of a mile from the high road, is Craeg y Saeflon, a circular encampment on the brow of a hill, thickly overgrown with trees and coppice, and commanding, through the openings of the wood, a beautiful perspective of the Bristol channel. It is supposed, from the name of Craeg y Saeflon, or the Saxon fortrefs, that this place was a Saxon encampment; but those who maintain this opinion, are wholly unacquainted with the customs and language of the Welsh. For my intelligent companion informed me, that by

long habit, derived from the inveteracy of their ancestors against the Saxons, the Welsh range all foreigners indiscriminately under the appellation of Saxons; a custom which has likewise misled many writers to affirm that the Saxon dominion was extended farther in these parts than is warranted by history. Between the encampment and the road, we passed through a pleasant meadow, called Maes Arthur, or the field of Arthur; which, according to uncertain tradition, derived its appellation from that renowned hero of British fable.

About a mile farther, close to the high road on the left, is a similar encampment, on the level summit of an eminence called Pen y Park Newydd, or the head of the New Park, a circular entrenchment, with a single foss, and rampart of earth. Several large stones are scattered in and near the foss, which appear to have formed part of the walls: the entrance is south-west by south*.

This spot commands a superb view: on the east the high and woody ridge crowned by the Pencamawr, stretches along the midland parts of Monmouthshire, and terminates in the bare tops of the Treleg hills; to the north-east is a lower chain of fertile eminences, backed by the Graeg and Garway, near the frontiers of Herefordshire. The view towards the north is distinguished by the great Skyrriid, towering like the point of a volcano; the long range of the Mynydd Maen, with Twyn Barlwm, rising like a vast excrescence on its southern extremity. Nearly north is Mynydd Machen, under which expands the beautiful vale of Machen, sprinkled with white cottages; to the north-west the castellated mansion and rich groves of Ruperra, connected with the chain of hills in Glamorgan-shire. The view to the south-west is closed by the low and narrow promontory of Pen Arth, and the mouth of the Taaf crowded with shipping. Southwards extend the levels of Caldecot and Wentloog, watered by the Usk, and bounded by the Bristol Channel, with the flat and steep Holms, appearing like points in a vast expanse of water.

The beauty of this prospect was heightened by the serenity of the weather and the

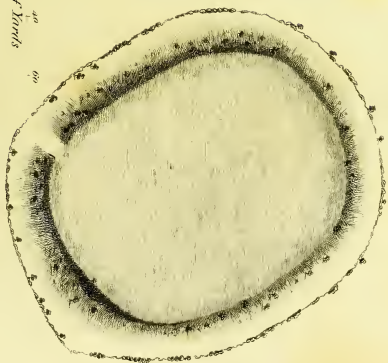
* For the shape and dimensions of this and the two other encampments, see the plate which accompanies this chapter.

ENCAMPMENT IN TREDEGAR PARK



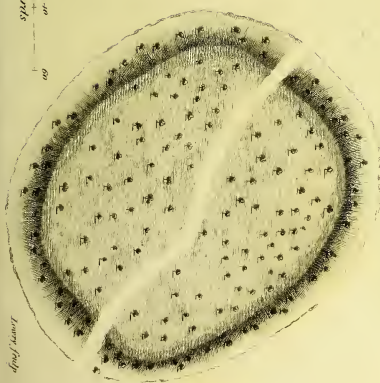
Scale of Yards
0 20 40 60 80 100

ENCAMPMENT ON NEW PARK



Scale of Yards
0 20 40 60

ENCAMPMENT OF CRAIG-Y-SAESON



Scale of Yards
0 20 40 60

Lower Camp

the clearness of the atmosphere; and in descending towards the plain, amid this diversified scenery, we could not suppress our admiration and delight.

At the half-way house between Newport and Caerdiff, we turned to the right, and passing the church of Lanvihangel Vedw, a handsome gothic edifice, reached the frontiers. The counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan are separated by the Rumney, over which is a stone bridge, leading to Kevenmably. On the eastern bank of the river is an old cottage, called Begam, pleasantly situated, said to be the site of the ancient mansion inhabited by the Kemeys family, before their residence was transferred to Kevenmably. Near it is a mill, supposed to have been the first ever erected in this county.

Returning by Lanvihangel Vedw to the half-way house, we proceeded to St. Melons, where the upper and lower roads from Newport to Caerdiff unite. The church is a singular but picturesque edifice, built with rag stone and plaistered. It consists of a nave, a chancel, a tower on the south side of the church, a chapel, a cemetery, and a porch to the west of the tower, which forms the principal entrance: the inside is narrow and long; the length from the western extremity to the termination of the chancel being 105 feet, and the breadth 21. Three low gothic arches, resting on rude columns of different forms, separate the chapel from the nave and part of the chancel; this chapel was probably the original church. The tower, which is a rude massive building, is placed at its western end, and communicates with it by a gothic doorway. The vaulted ceiling is not unworthy of notice, particularly at the eastern extremity of the chapel, where it is ornamented with curious compartments of carved wood, exhibiting clusters of foliage and grotesque heads. Opposite the chapel, and on the other side of the chancel, is the cemetery of the Morgans seated at Lanrumney.

According to the History of the Saints, St. Melo or Melanias, to whom the church is dedicated, was a native of Caerdiff, and planted christianity in these parts, about the middle of the third century; he was bishop of Rouen, and built, in 270, the cathedral, dedicated to the Virgin Mary*. In the British language the church is called Laneirwg, or the church of Eirwg, which signifies golden, an appellation which he derived from his swarthy complexion.

Three

* Ducarel's Alien Pories.

Three miles from St. Melons, close to the high road from Newport to Cardiff, is the church of Rumney, which is dedicated to St. Augustine, and is a very large edifice, being not less than 180 feet from the western extremity of the tower to the end of the chancel. The tower is decorated with battlements and gothic pinnacles; the doorways are also gothic, excepting the western entrance, which is formed by a semicircular arch reposing on clustered columns. The windows exhibit remains of glass, painted with fleurs-de-lis, and other armorial bearings. This church was granted by William earl of Gloucester to the abbey of Bristol, and is now in the patronage of the dean and chapter. It stands at the distance of a quarter of a mile from the bridge over the Rumney, which is here a mountain torrent, and only navigable, by means of the tide, about three miles from its mouth.

Various etymologies have been given of the word Rumney: some derive it from the Romans, who had stations in the vicinity, others from the Saxon word Rumon-ca, signifying a water, or watery place; a name well adapted to its situation on the borders of the level of Wentloog, which is also called Rumney marsh.

In Welsh the river Rumney was anciently called the Elarch, or the Swan river. Hence it is supposed to derive its appellation from swans, which frequented these marshes in great numbers before they were drained. Others may conjecture that the name was derived from a colony of that nation, whom the Greeks figured under the name of *Κυανοί* or swans, as settled on the banks of the Po, Pactolus, and Meander, and singing dirges at their own funerals: a fable which gave rise to much beautiful imagery and charming fictions of the Greek poets concerning

Μουσῶν ορνίθες, αἰδοτάτοι πετελαῶν.

Callimachus.

“These birds of the muses, the most harmonious of winged creatures.” The songs of these swans are said to have reached London, and with the same facility they might have arrived on the banks of the Rumney*.

From

* See Mr. Bryant's learned and interesting disquisition in his *Analysis of Ancient Mythology*, vol. 1. p. 267—284.

From the bridge of the Rumney* we returned to St. Melons, and pursued our journey along the lower or new turnpike road, from Newport to Caerdiff. This road runs along the side of the wooded eminences that skirt the edge of Wentloog level, and overlooks the whole of that fertile tract, rescued by human industry from the devastation of the sea. The level exhibits a singular and uniform appearance of a plain, divided into fields of pasture, intersected with drains, and dotted with a few white cottages, among which the towers of St. Bride's, Marthfield, and Peterston churches rise conspicuous; the waters of the Bristol channel, beyond, seem like a continuation of this level surface.

We passed through Castleton, a small village, which derives its name from an ancient castle at the bottom of the hill, on which the encampment of Pen y park Newydd is situated. It was formerly a place of strength, and was probably built or occupied by the Normans, for the purpose of retaining their conquest of Wentloog. The only remains are a barrow in the garden of Mr. Philips, which is supposed to have been the site of the citadel, and a stone barn, once a chapel.

From Castleton we continued our route under the walls of Gwern y Cleppa park, where Mr. Evans pointed out to me the ruins of the old mansion, in the midst of thickets, once the residence of Ivor Hael, or Ivor the Generous, second son of Lewellin ap Ivor, lord of Tredegar. He was patron and uncle to David

ap

* Near Rumney are two small encampments which I was not apprised of, and therefore did not visit in my tour to the frontiers. Having since my return received an account of their position, Mr. Evans, at my request, was so kind as to describe them, and Mr. Morris surveyed them.

Beyond the junction of the upper and lower road from Newport to Caerdiff, and near Pen y Pil, is a small encampment of an irregular figure, betwixt an oval and a polygon. It is situated on an abrupt eminence near a small stream, the source of which is under the north-west side of the entrenchment. Its length is scarcely fifty yards, and its greatest breadth forty. The entrenchments are deep: the height of the embankment on the north and east sides is about eleven yards; the declivity on the south and west, from the nature of the ground, is much greater, the entrenchment being thrown up on the edge of a deep

dingle, which is watered by the little stream. The entrance is on the south-east, and fronts the lower road from St. Melon's to Rumney.

The second encampment overhangs the steep banks of the Rumney, a quarter of a mile above the bridge, and about three hundred yards from the turnpike. Its shape, as may be seen in the plan, is almost that of a D. Its greatest length is sixty-five yards, and breadth fifty. The depth of the entrenchments, and the height of the banks of earth, particularly towards the river, evidently prove that it was meant to guard the passage, and to prevent the incursions of an enemy from the opposite banks. Connected with the western side is a triangular outwork, the rampart of which is much lower than that inclosing the principal encampment. See the plans on the same plate with that of Twyn Barlwm.

ap Gwillim *, the celebrated bard of Glamorganfhire, whose works are published by Mr. Owen Jones. Roger Morgan, the laft male of his descendants, dying in 1632, the estate came to the family of Tredegar.

Continuing our progrefs along the high road, we proceeded to Tredegar houfe, the large and magnificent manfion of the Morgan family. The grounds are extenfive and diverfified, and contain feveral fine features, both of a rude and pleasing caft, which are capable of great improvement. They are richly covered with groves of oaks and Spanifh chefnuts, remarkable for their age, fize, and beauty; and traverfed by the torrent Ebwy, the red colour of whose rocky banks is ftrikingly contrafted with the furrounding verdure. But the combination of thefe fcenes into one grand whole, is prevented by the interpoftion of the turnpike road from Newport to Caerdiff, which divides the old and new park, and paffes within a few hundred yards of the houfe.

Tredegar houfe has been long the refidence of the Morgan family. Part of the original edifice, which is mentioned by Leland †, as “a very fair place of ftone,” ftill remains, and is converted into offices. The principal part of the manfion is more modern, and was conftituted in the reign of Charles the fecond; it is of red brick, and being without projeftions or ornaments, has a mafive appearance, and is more remarkable for fize than elegance. The apartments are large, well proportioned, and convenient; feveral are left in their original ftate. One of the moft remarkable is the oak room, fo called becaufe it is wainfcotted and floored with oak; the wainfcot is richly carved in the ftyle of the laft century, and the floor is formed from the planks of a fingle tree; whose enormous height and fize may be collected from the dimensions of the apartment, which is forty-two feet in length, and twenty-feven in breadth.

Among a large collection of pictures, there is a fine portrait of ferjeant Maynard, in his robes; a head of judge Morgan, with an infcription on the back: “Judge Morgan, recorder of Brecknockfhire, and grandfather of Blanch, who married William Morgan of Tredegar, efq. and by whom the Brecknockfhire eftate defcended into the Tredegar family.”

Several

* A tranflation of one of his odes is given in the Appendix.

† Itin. vol. 4. fol. 51.

Several family portraits are not unworthy of notice, as they assist in tracing the line of descent, and correcting the erroneous pedigrees which have been given of this illustrious family. Thomas Morgan of Machen, esq. painted on wood, with an inscription; æt. 52, 1620; a half length: he is dressed in a black robe, with a sword and belt; the beard is pointed, hair strait, and a ruff round the neck, according to the fashion of James the first.

Sir William Morgan; ætatis suæ 90, 1650. This portrait represents the figure of a venerable old man, holding in one hand a book, in the other a stick. Thomas Morgan, esq. æt. 74, 1664. He was the son of sir William Morgan, and possessed Tredegar and Machen. The heads of sir William Morgan, knight of the bath, of Thomas Morgan, his brother, of the late John Morgan, esq. by whose death the male line of the Morgan family became extinct; and of his sister Jane, the late wife of sir Charles Gould Morgan, who, in virtue of his marriage, became possessor of the mansion and estate.

The family of Morgan, being so conspicuous in the history of Wales, the Welsh bards have exerted their utmost ingenuity to trace its origin and lineage. Fanciful genealogists have presumed to derive it from the third son of Noah, and modestly affect to correct the mistake of the English, in carrying the pedigree to Cam, his second son. Some stop with Brutus, the conqueror of Britain; others with Beli, one of the British kings, and some are even content with Caradoc or Caractacus. It is however generally agreed, that Cadivor the Great, lord of Dyfed, who died in 1084, was their great ancestor. He married Eleanor, daughter of the lord of Kilsant, at which place, called in Monmouthshire, the cradle of the Morgans, his son Bledri, was settled. His grandson, Ivor ap Bledri, was lord of St. Clare* in Caermarthenshire. Lewellyn ap Ivor, the fifth descendant from Cadivor the Great, espoused Angharad, daughter and heiress of sir Morgan Meredith, knight, of Tredegar, from whom the mansion and estate were derived. He was the father of Morgan, who inherited Tredegar, of Ivor the Generous, founder of the line of Gwern y Cleppa, and of Philip, ancestor of the Lewis's of St. Pierre.

On

* Among the papers in the possession of William Jones, esq. of Clytha, are several documents which prove that the family possessed the estate of St. Clare long after their establishment at Tredegar.

On the death of sir John Morgan, at the latter end of the fifteenth century, this branch was divided into the lines of Tredegar and Machen. William Morgan, the lineal descendant of the Tredegar line, who was sheriff in the 6th year of Elizabeth, dying without legitimate issue, seems to have bequeathed the estate to his natural son John, whose son Miles inherited Tredegar, and was sheriff in the 17th of Elizabeth. Miles espoused Catherine, daughter of Rowland Morgan, of Machen, and by his will, signed in 1578, devised the estate to his brother-in-law Thomas, whose son and successor, sir William Morgan, knight, resided at Tredegar in the reign of Charles the first, and during the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell. After the death of sir William, Thomas his son removed from Machen, and made the additions to Tredegar house. His descendant sir William Morgan, knight of the Bath, died in 1731, and left four children, William, Edward, Rachel, and Elizabeth. Edward and Rachel died in their infancy; Elizabeth married William Jones, esq. and William deceasing without issue, Thomas his uncle entered upon the landed estate, in virtue of sir William Morgan's will, which passing over the daughters, without once naming them, was so unskilfully worded, as to occasion a law-suit between Elizabeth and Thomas. It continued twenty years, and was finally decided by the house of lords, in favour of Charles the son of Thomas, who dying without issue, the estate devolved on his brother John, the last male of this line. Leaving no children, he bequeathed Tredegar and the greater part of his large property to his sister Jane, wife of sir Charles Gould, baronet, now sir Charles Morgan, and after her decease to her husband, with an entail upon their son Charles Morgan, esq. of Ruperra*.

From Tredegar we crossed a wooden bridge over the Ebwy, flowing in the midst of a broad and stony channel, which though often an insignificant stream,

is

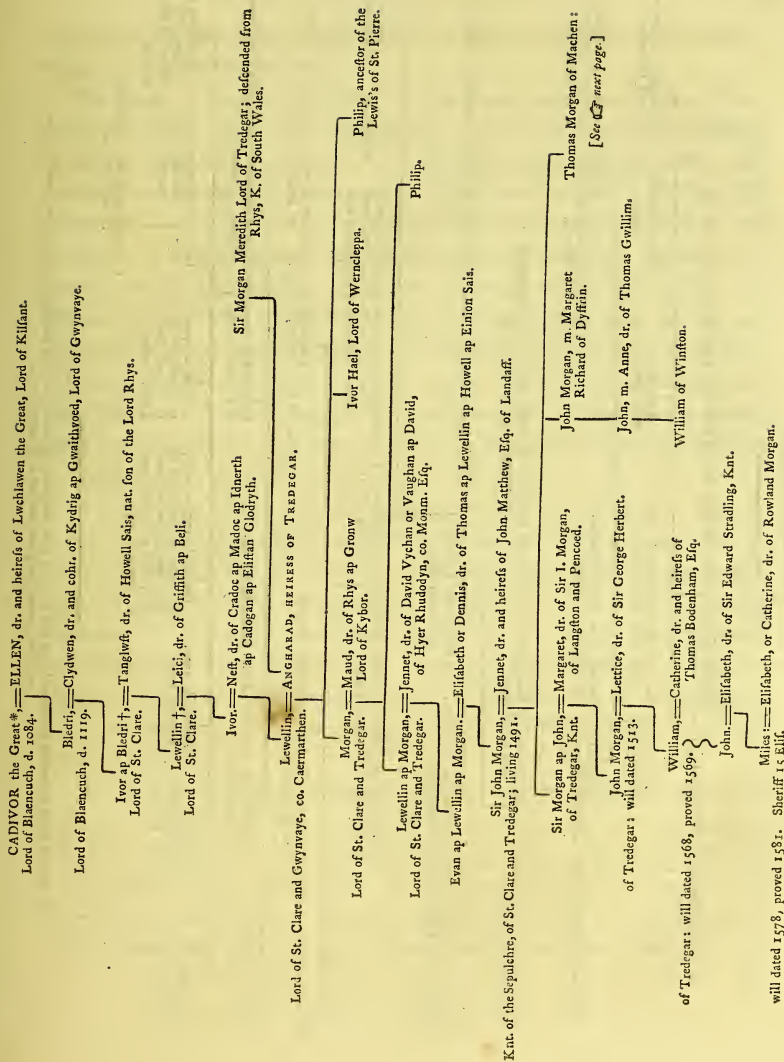
* I have collected this account of the Morgan family, and the annexed pedigree, from documents in the possession of William Jones, esq. of Clytha, from ancient pedigrees in the Herald's Office, and from a pedigree drawn up by the late John Morgan, esq. In the second volume of the Cambrian Register is a pedigree of the Morgans, which differs from these accounts: it breaks the male line, and continues the descent through Margaret, daughter of Morgan ap

Lewellin, who espouses Trahaern Meurig, in the following manner,

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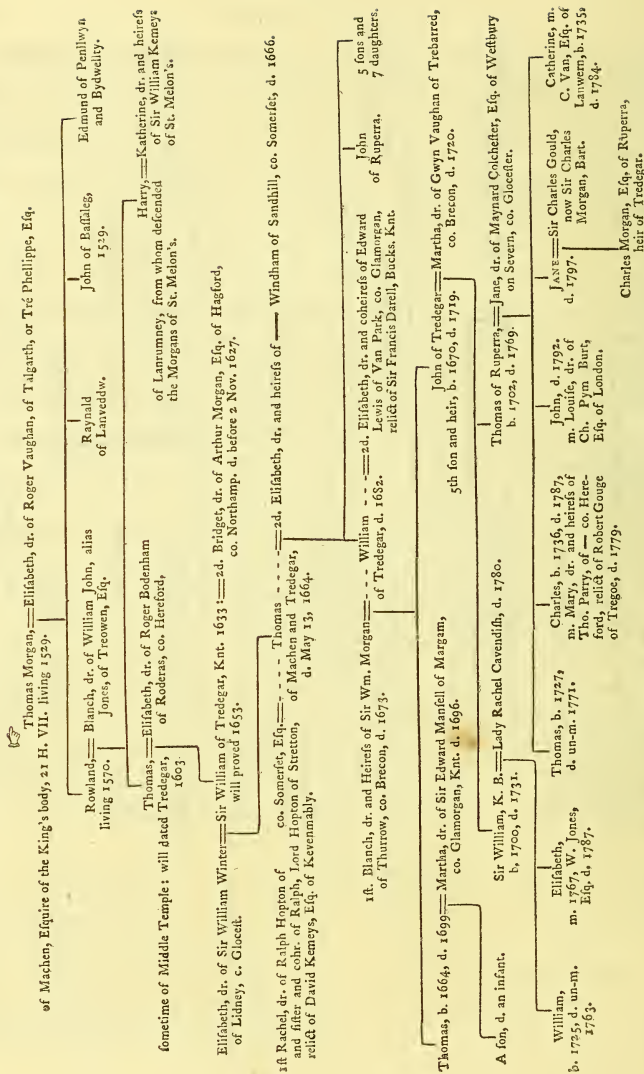
Lewellin ap Ivor.
|
Morgan.
|
Trahaern Meurig = MARGARET.
|
Lewellin ap Trahaern.
|
Ivan Lewellin.

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* The arms of Cadivor the Great were arg. a lion rampant guardant fa. which was long used as the first quartering of his descendants, although, or a griffin fessant fa. is now borne by the family. The lion, however, appears in the first quartering of the shield of arms over the door of Tredgar house, which was probably built in the reign of Charles II.

† In an ancient pedigree of the Morgan family now at Tredgar, and kindly communicated by Sir Charles Morgan, the first Ivor and Llewelin are omitted.



In addition to the authorities mentioned in the note to p. 66, I am indebted to the kindness of Sir Charles Morgan for the communication of several ancient pedigrees preserved at Tredegar house.

is occasionally swollen by the rains, and like an Alpine torrent, spreads its devastations to a considerable distance.

Returning to Newport, I visited, in a subsequent excursion, Machen Place, another ancient seat of the Morgan family. After passing through Bassaleg, I left the upper road to Caerdiff, and traversing an undulating country, well wooded, and diversified with corn and pasture, entered the vale of Machen. The scenery of this sequestered spot is a pleasing intermixture of wildness and cultivation; it is of an oval shape, and the hills, with which it is skirted, are partly covered with herbage, and partly overhung with thick forests. The Rumney, here also the boundary of the two counties, sweeps along the vale, and is lost in deep and impervious woods. The white cottages scattered in the plain and on the gentle acclivities, the church, with its white body and brown tower, and Machen hill, whose steep side is almost covered with limekilns appearing like small caves in the rock, form all together a singular and cheerful assemblage of objects.

Machen Place is situated at the commencement of the vale, under the hanging groves of Ruperra. This once respectable seat, now a farm house hastening to decay, still exhibits a few traces of past grandeur: a circular apartment, called the hunting room, is decorated with a rich stuccoed ceiling, representing the figure of Diana in the middle, with seats, churches, and hunting parties, in twelve surrounding compartments. A pair of andirons weighing three hundred pounds, which were not unusually employed in roasting an ox whole, with a large oak table on which it was served, convey a recollection of former times and former hospitality.

The branch of the family settled at Machen, were the descendants of sir John Morgan, knight of the sepulchre, by his third son Thomas. Of his grandson Rowland, Leland says, "There is another of the Morgans, dwelling by Rumny" at Magheñ, having a fair house. He had bene a man of fair landes, if his "father had not divided it partely to other of his sunnes*." The last person who resided here was Thomas, who after the death of his father sir William, made

the

* Leland's Itin. vol. 4. fol. 53.

the additions to Tredegar house, from which period Machen Place was gradually deserted.

Having examined the mansion, I walked to the church, which stands on the other side of the road, at the distance of about half a mile: it is a small edifice of a simple form, with gothic windows and doors. To the north of the chancel is a chapel, the burial place of the Morgan family; in which repose the ashes of those who resided at Machen, Tredegar, and Ruperra. There are no tombs and inscriptions before the beginning of this century. Most of these memorials are simple gravestones, on each of which the names of several persons are inscribed.

Three marble tablets are placed against the walls, with emblazoned coats of arms. The first was erected to the memory of John Morgan, esq. of Ruperra, the son of Thomas Morgan of Machen and Tredegar, a London merchant, who after acquiring a large fortune, retired to Ruperra, which he had purchased, and died in 1715. He was a considerable benefactor to the family, and left the mansion and estate of Ruperra to his nephew John, whom the second tablet commemorates in an inscription too long to be inserted. He was lord lieutenant of the counties of Monmouth and Brecon, member of parliament for Monmouthshire, and a great supporter of the whig interest; he died in 1719, aged 50.

The third tablet is sacred to the memory of his son sir William Morgan, who was born 1701, and in 1725 was inaugurated knight of the Bath, on the revival of the order. He espoused Lady Rachel Cavendish, eldest daughter of William, second duke of Devonshire, and died in 1731, aged 30. His epitaph contains a warm eulogium of his character.

“ Though he came when young to the Possession

“ of

“ Power, Honour, an high Alliance, and a great Estate;

“ Yet they neither made him forget himself,

“ Nor his Father's Friends.

“ He was a Stranger to Insolence, Oppression, or Ingratitude,

“ Humane, courteous, and benevolent.

“ In

“ In his Converfation and at his Table,

“ Sprightly, free, and engaging,

“ A Lover of his Neighbours, compaffionate, and charitable ;

“ Amiable for thefe, and other good Qualities,

“ And much lamented at his untimely Death.”

His wife furvived him near fifty years, and died in 1780, in the eighty-first year of her age.

The eminence which rifes above the church, is called from the vale, Machen hill, and is a remarkable feature on the western fide of the county. It contains fmall quantities of zinc and lead, but is rich in the beft coal, which is in much repute for the furnaces and brafs manufactories ; it abounds alfo with lime-ftone, which forms a confiderable branch of traffic in thefe parts, for the purpofe of manure.

A little beyond Machen church the vale narrows, and the road runs between two ridges of hills overhanging the Rumney, here a fmall but rapid torrent ; foon afterwards it widens and opens into a more extenfive country, fprinkled with neat farm houfes, in the midft of inclofures of corn and pasture. This diftrict is extremely fertile and well cultivated, and yields more corn, in proportion to its extent, than any other part of Monmouthfhire.

A pleafant walk leads from the turnpike acrofs the fields to the church of Bedwas, fituated at the foot of the hills, about half a mile from the high road. The church, which is dedicated to St. Barrog, a faint of whom I can find no account, contains nothing worthy of notice ; it is held in commendam with the fee of Landaff, and forms no inconfiderable part of its fcanty revenues. The view from the church yard is pleafing and diverfified. On one fide ftretch the wild hills of Monmouthfhire, on the other, a fertile and extenfive vale, with the majestic battlements of Caerphilly caftle, appearing like the ruins of a vaft city, and towering above the fwelling and wooded eminences with which they are furrounded.

From Bedwas I croffed the Rumney into Glamorganshire, and paffing through Caerphilly, made a circuit by Ruperra houfe, and re-entered Monmouthfhire

at

at Machen bridge, where the Rumney, pent up in a narrow channel, breaks over its rocky bed, and rushes down the wooded declivities.

Another branch of the Morgan family was seated at Rogeston castle, about half a mile from Bassaleg, and near three from Newport. It stands in a pleasing situation, not far from the Ebwy, whose red precipitous banks are tufted with trees.

This ancient castle, called in Welsh* Tre Gwillim, or William's House, belonged to the ancestor of the Stradling or Esterling family, one of the twelve knights who assisted Robert Fitzhamon in the conquest of Glamorganshire. But I am wholly ignorant by what means it came into the possession of the Morgans, or to whom it descended on the extinction of that line. The only remains of the ancient structure are visible in the walls and outhouses of the present mansion, which is a modern edifice, and built on the old foundations. These fragments are very massive, and measure, without their facings, near seven feet in thickness; they occupy a mount, which was the site of the citadel, and appears to have been very extensive; the field adjoining to the garden is still called the castle-clofe. The premises, as well as some adjoining works on the banks of the Ebwy, belong to the royal mine company, and are tenanted by Mr. Butler of Caerleon; they were erected in 1772 for copper works, but are now used for the manufacture of iron rods, bars, bolts for shipping, and tin plates*.

* See account of Mr. Butler's Manufactories, near Caerleon, of which this is a branch, in Chap. 11.

CHAPTER 9.

Level of Wentloog.—Sea Walls.—Greenfield Castle.—Churches of St. Bride's, Peterston, and Marshfield.—Excursion to Twyn Barlwm.

THE level of Wentloog is that district which stretches from east to west, between the rivers Usk and Rumney, and from north to south, between the Bristol Channel and the gentle ridge of Tredegar Park, Gwern y Cleppa, Castle-ton, St. Melon's, and Rumney. This whole tract, like the level of Caldecot, is perfectly flat, and rescued from the devastations of the sea by a line of embankments or sea walls, which are not built of stone, as those in Caldecot Level near Goldcliff, but wholly constructed with earth. The proprietors of these lands are subject to the same laws as those of Romney Marsh in Kent, and are under the controul of a court of sewers. The account of the constitution of this court, communicated by my friend Mr. Evans, who is himself one of the commissioners, is inserted in the Appendix.

The labour and expence of this great undertaking may be collected from the length of the sea walls :

	Perches.	Feet.	Inches.
In Rumney Parish - - - - -	909	16	0
— Peterston - - - - -	769	9	6
— St. Brides - - - - -	824	18	5
— Baffaleg - - - - -	725	17	0
— St. Woolos - - - - -	1676	5	0
	4906	5	11

In company with Mr. Evans, I visited several places in this extensive level. A mile and a half to the south-west of Newport, in the level of Mendalgyl, are

the ruins of Castell Gläs, or Green Castle, which stand on the left bank of the Ebwy, not far from its confluence with the Usk; it was formerly a castle belonging to the duke of Lancaster, and esteemed a place of strength and security in the civil wars. It is neither mentioned by Leland or Camden, but is described by Churchyard in the reign of Elizabeth*.

The remains of this once strong and splendid castle, which stand near the farm house, consist of a building now used as a stable for cattle, a square tower with a spiral stair-case, a stone edifice containing several apartments, in one of which is a large fire-place, with a fine gothic entrance, and in the inside several gothic doors. It is faced with hewn limestone from an adjoining quarry. Some detached ruins and foundations, which are continually dug up, prove its former extent. At a small distance is a circular mound, surrounded with a foss, and overgrown with thickets; this was probably the site of the ancient keep or citadel; it overhangs the old channel of the Ebwy. Within the memory of the present tenant, was a stone wall about five feet high parallel to the banks, where vessels, which could ascend the river, used to unload. The estate once formed a portion of the duchy of Lancaster†, but now belongs to the family of Tredegar, and the farm is called Greenfield.

We next visited the three churches of the Level, St. Bride's, Peterstone and Marshfield. The ground, like marshy plains which have been drained, is cut into parallel ditches, in some of which the water stagnates, in others it runs in perpetual streams, called rheens, which fall into the sea through flood-gates or gouts. The roads leading through these flat marshes are straight, narrow, and pitched, which exhaust the patience of the traveller, like that mentioned in Horace:

" Minus gravis appia tardis."

These

* " A goodly feate, a tower, a princely pyle,
" Built as a watch, or fastie for the soyle,
" By river stands, from Neawport not three myle.
" This house was made, when many a bloodie broyle,
" In Wales, God wot, destroy'd that publicke state;
" Here men with sword and shield did braules debate:
" Here fastie stood, for many things in deede,
" That fought safeguard, and did some sucker neede,

" The name thereof, the nature shewes a right,
" Greenefield it is, full gay and goodly fure,
" A fine sweet soyle, most pleasant unto sight,
" That for delight, and wholefome ayre so pure,
" It may be praise'd, a plot fought out so well,
" As though a king should say, here will I dwell;
" The pastures greene, the woods and water cleere,
" Sayth any prince may buyld a pallace heere."

Worthines of Wales, p. 50.

† Archives of the duchy of Lancaster.

These marshes, being only inhabited by farmers and labourers, contain very few houses and cottages. The natives are in general Welsh, and many of them scarcely understand English; consequently the churches are served in the Welsh language. In former times the population must have been considerable, because the churches are large, and capable of containing great congregations, though now reduced to forty or fifty persons.

The church of St. Bride's, in Welsh Lanfanfraed, or Llan faint fryd, is about three miles and a half from Newport. The tower is a handsome structure of hewn stone, in the gothic style of architecture, and more modern than the other parts, which are of coarser materials. A high and narrow gothic arch at the west end of the church, and two low pointed arches on clustered pillars, the shafts of which are not more than four feet five inches in height, separating a small chapel from the chancel, seem to indicate that this part of the building was constructed soon after the introduction of gothic architecture. On the south wall of the church, within a porch which forms the principal entrance, is an inscription carved in free stone:

THE . GREAT . FLVD

20 IANVARIE

IN THE MORNING

1606.

The lowest part of this inscription, which marks the height to which the waters arrived, is about five feet from the ground: a second inundation in 1708 covered the Level from Magor to Caerdiff*, and another happened a few years ago, but neither was so high as that of 1606.

The church of Peterston, situated at the distance of six miles to the south-west of St. Bride's, and within a quarter of a mile from the sea walls, is a singularly large and elegant edifice for a district so remote and ill inhabited; it is wholly constructed

* The dreadful devastations of this inundation, were described in a pamphlet called "Lamentable News from Monmouthshire in Wales. Containing the wonderfull, and most fearfull accidents of the overflowing of the waters in the said countrey,

drowning infinite numbers of cattell of all kinds, as sheepe, oxen, kine, and horses, with others, together with the losse of many men, women, and children, and subversion of xxvi parishes in January last." 1608, 4to.

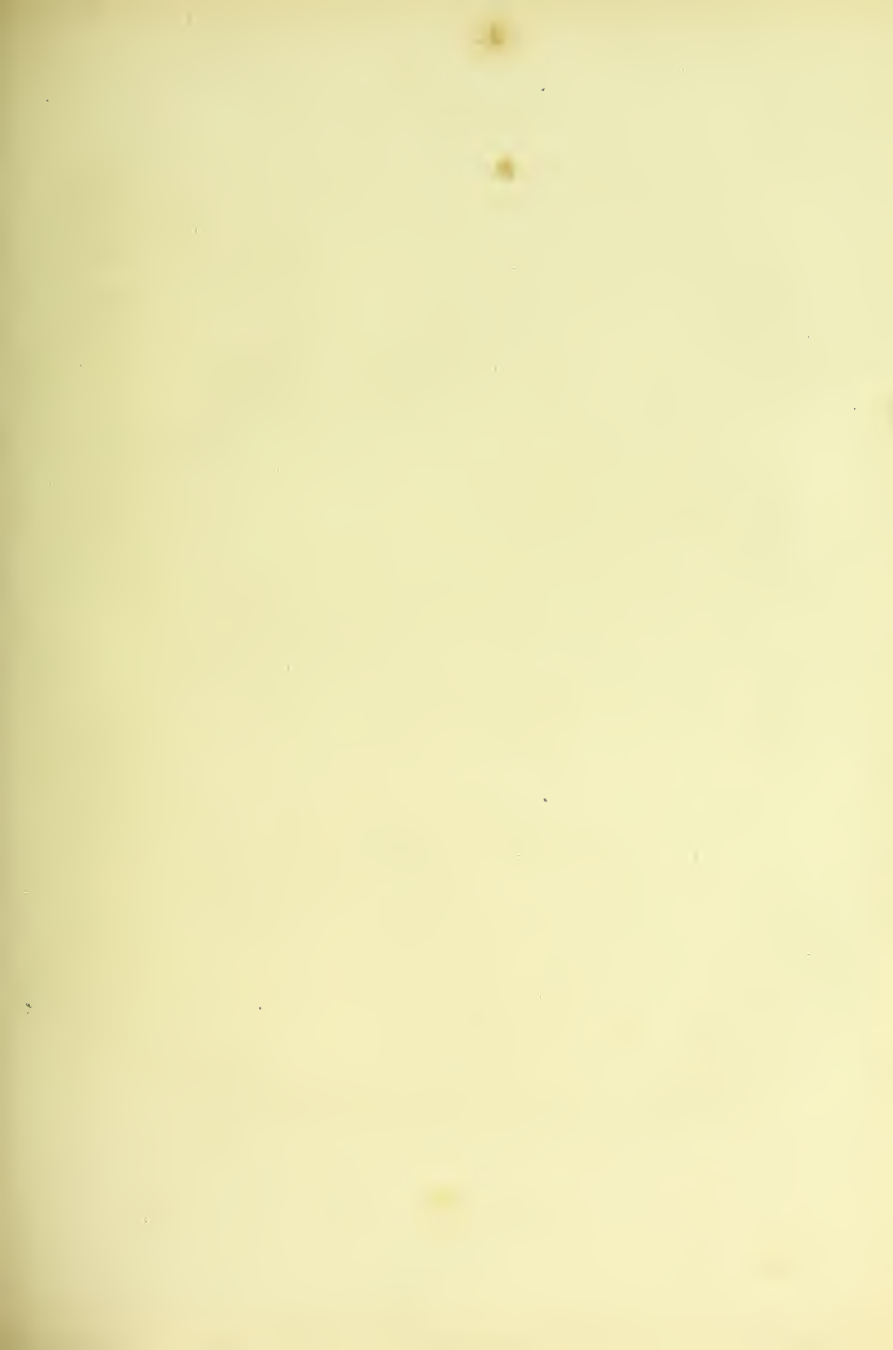
constructed with hewn stone, and the tower exhibits a good specimen of gothic architecture. The inside consists of a nave and side aisles, decorated with two ranges of lofty and elegant gothic arches, reposing on clustered pillars. The church is greatly dilapidated, and the roof though now flat, was originally vaulted with stone; some grotesque heads, which formed the base of the flying columns that supported the roof, still remain on the side walls above the pillars. The arches are bulged, and the columns have considerably declined from the perpendicular direction. The chancel is fallen down, but its site may be traced on the outside of the present east window.

This church is dedicated to St. Peter, and was built in the twelfth century by Mabile, daughter and heiress of Robert Fitzhamon, the great Norman baron, who conquered Glamorganshire, and wife of the puissant chief Robert earl of Gloucester, natural son of Henry the first. She gave it to the abbey of Bristol, with an addition of sixty acres of land in the parish of Peterston *. The dean and chapter of Bristol are proprietors and patrons.

From the top of the tower, the view, though not picturesque, is striking and singular; it commands the whole of the Level, skirted towards the Bristol Channel by the extensive line of sea walls, and on the side of the land bounded by an amphitheatre of wooded eminences, backed by ranges of hills towering in succession one above the other.

Marshfield church is three miles and a half from Peterston, near the extremity of the Level towards Castrleton; it is more ancient than Peterston, is built chiefly of rubble stone, plaistered and white washed, and consists of a square tower or belfry, a nave, and a chancel. The roof is of wood, vaulted; in some parts are remains of painted ornaments, with which the beams were once covered. The windows and doorways are all gothic, excepting the entrance to the south, which is a semicircular arch, ornamented with a foliage of twisted branches, and reposing on two slender columns; this entrance is concealed by a handsome gothic porch. The tythes of the parish and the advowson of the church were granted by

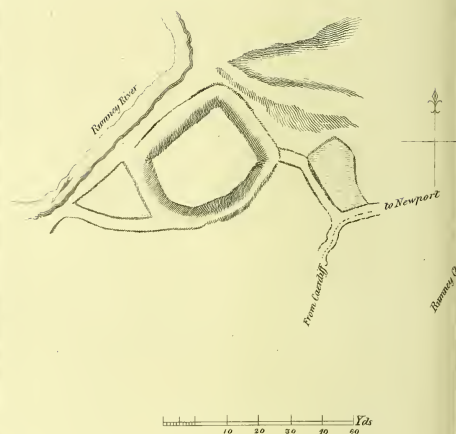
* Barrett's History of Bristol, p. 258.



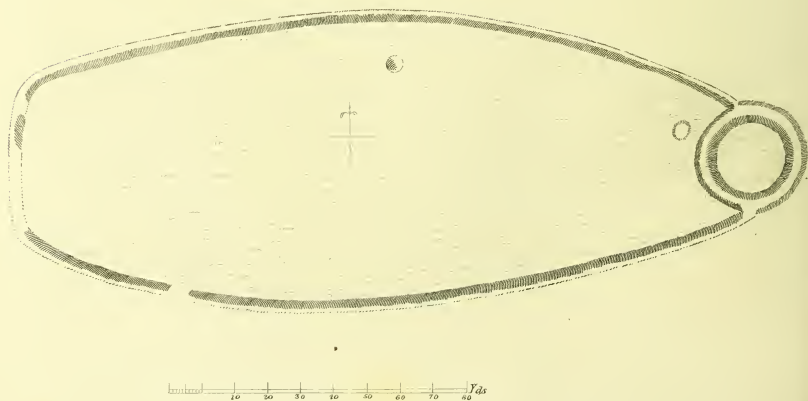
Encampment near Pen-y-Pil



Encampment near Rumney Bridge



Tumulus and Entrenchment on Twyn Barlwm



by William earl of Gloucester, and lord of Wentloog, to the abbey of Bristol. The dean and chapter of Bristol are also patrons and proprietors.

A narrow pitched road from Marthfield church leads to Castleton, from which place we returned by Tredegar to Caerau.

The peculiar appearance of Twyn Barlwm, and its situation at the extremity of the long ridge of the Mynydd Maen, with its steep declivities and abrupt separation from Machen Hill, excited my curiosity to ascend to its summit. Three times I was prevented by rainy weather, but at length was fortunate enough, in a fine day and a clear atmosphere, to attain the object of my expedition.

We departed from Caerau, and quitting the upper Caerdiff road at the hand-post, continued three miles along the turnpike leading to Risca, passing not far from the course of the Ebwy, through a beautifully wooded country of hill and dale, diversified with inclosures of corn and pasture. We then left the Risca road, ascended a steep pitch to the canal, crossed it over a bridge, and in a short time came to a cottage about two miles from the village of Henllys. Here quitting our chaise, we rode up a gentle acclivity, clothed with copses and underwood, along a narrow and stony path, and in three quarters of an hour reached the bottom of the swelling hill called Twyn Barlwm. We skirted its base over some heathy and boggy ground, and alighting from our horses, ascended to the top.

The eminence of Twyn Barlwm is a swelling height, about six miles in circumference at its base, rising on the south-western extremity of Mynydd Maen; and is covered with coarse russet herbage, moss and heath, without a single tree, from which it derives its name*. The summit is a flat surface of an oval shape, and on the highest part is crowned with a circular tumulus, or artificial mound of earth and stones, eighteen yards in height, and surrounded with a deep foss. The entrance is north-east, from which a trench, about three feet in depth, is carried round the brow of the eminence, and returns to the opposite side of the tumulus. The shape and dimensions are accurately delineated by Mr. Morrice in the annexed plan.

Many

* Twyn Barlwm, in Welsh y Twyn a'i var yn Llwm, or the hill with the summit barren or naked. From Twyn a hill, Bar a summit, and Llwm barren or naked.

Many different opinions have been formed concerning the origin and use of this work. Some call it a beacon, some a strong hold, and others a place of sepulture. I am inclined to believe that it was originally one of those places of sepulture called Carns*, which in the early ages of the world were in common use among all nations, and particularly among the Britons, who were accustomed to bury their most famous leaders on the highest eminences, either as a conspicuous memorial, or to strike terror into their enemies. In subsequent times it may have been employed as a beacon, or even as a temporary fastness, in case of a sudden invasion; though from its size and condition, it could not be used as a permanent place of defence. It might contain the ashes of some valiant chief among the Silures, who fell in defending his country against the Romans. The name of Cwm Carn, or the valley of the Carn, which is given to a neighbouring dingle, in the sides of the Mynydd Maen, may have been derived from this tumulus. But whatever was its primary destination, I am informed by Mr. Owen, that according to a tradition in the neighbourhood, and particularly among the present race of bards, it was once a celebrated place for holding the Eisteddfod, or bardic meetings.

Twyn Barlwm being situated on the highest point of the chain which bounds the rich valleys watered by the Usk, commands one of the most singular and glorious prospects which I had yet enjoyed in Monmouthshire; and which cannot be reduced to a specific and adequate description. To the south, the levels of Caldecot and Wentloog, with the broad Severn, losing itself in an expanse of sea, seemed to stretch at the bottom of its sloping declivity; the town of Newport, and the tower of Christchurch rising in the midst of hills and forests. To the east appear the cultivated parts of Monmouthshire, swelling into numerous undulations fertilised by the meandering Usk. These rich prospects are contrasted on the north and west, with a waving surface of mountains that stretch beyond the confines of Glamorganshire and Brecknockshire. This dreary expanse is nothing but a succession of russet eminences, almost without the appearance of a single habitation, excepting the district of Crofs Penmaen, which is profusely studded with white houses on the summit, and along the sloping declivities.

* See some sensible remarks on these sepulchral monuments in the Cambrian Register, vol. 2. p. 350.

clivities. The beautiful valleys of the Ebwy and Sorwy appear in the hollows between the mountains, deeply shaded with trees, and watered by torrents which faintly glimmer through the intervening foliage.

Quitting reluctantly this delightful prospect, we walked down the heathy side of the mountain, and then passed along a narrow path, leading through thickets, under the western extremity of Twyn Barlwm, which is a rocky precipice overhanging the church of Risca. The beautiful glen through which the Ebwy flows, seemed to open as we descended, and caught a view of the torrent from its junction with the Sorwy, flowing under the new canal, which appears like a floating ribband winding along the sides of the projecting declivities. Entering into the road a little beyond the church of Risca, we continued along a wide and fertile valley, much exposed to the inundations of the Ebwy, and bounded by chains of undulating hills.

CHAPTER 10.

Road from Newport to Caerleon.—Malpas Church.—Caerleon.—Etymology.—Roman Antiquities.—Walls.—Circumference.—Amphitheatre.—Suburbs, or Ultra Pontem.—Castle.—Ancient Encampments in the Vicinity.

TWO roads lead from Newport to Caerleon; the one crosses the Usk over the new bridge, and continues along the turnpike two miles and a half, then passes the west end of Christchurch, descends to the bridge, and over the Usk to Caerleon; this is the shortest, and most frequented: the other winds round Malpas Pill, continues parallel to the right bank of the Usk, and enters the north-western gate of Caerleon. This was the only way during the construction of Newport bridge. The distance from Newport to Caerleon by this road, is four miles and a half.

A principal object of curiosity in this route, is the church of Malpas, on the right side of the road, a mile and a half from Newport.

There was a religious house for two cluniac monks at Malpas, which was a cell to the priory of Montacute, in Somersetshire; and is supposed by Tanner to be the Terra de Cairlion, granted to that monastery by Winebald de Baeluna, in the reign of Henry the first *. Edmund earl of Stafford, who possessed Newport castle, was the patron. It was granted as parcel of Montacute, in 1546, to sir William Herbert of St. Julian's.

The chapel of this cell, now the parish church, is worthy of being visited by the antiquary, as one of the most ancient religious edifices in these parts.

It is a small building of unhewn stone, of an oblong shape like a barn, with a belfry having two apertures for bells. The arched door which is on the western side,

* Tanner's Notitia Monastica, art. Monmouthshire.

side, the stone frames of the three principal windows, as well as the arch which separates the chancel from the church, are all rounded, and decorated with friezes of hatched moulding, denticles, and receding columns, peculiar to the Saxon and Norman architecture. The arch of the southern window, which seems to have been a doorway, is more elegantly ornamented, and embossed with roses, not unlike the Etruscan style. All the columns, which are mostly of a rude form, have dissimilar capitals and shafts, a striking feature in Saxon structures. Some modern gothic windows have been introduced into the stone frames of the original apertures.

The church is dedicated to St. Mary, and is a perpetual curacy in the diocese of Landaff. After the dissolution, it remained in the patronage of the family of St. Julian's, to whom the site of the priory lands was granted, but is now in the presentation of sir Charles Morgan, the family of Tredegar having purchased the advowson, with the great and small tythes. The extended value of the curacy is only five pounds; but it has been greatly benefited by queen Anne's bounty; lands having been purchased and annexed to it, which are now let for thirty-five pounds, and are highly improvable.

Malpas is supposed, by those who are fond of tracing etymologies from the Latin tongue, to derive its appellation from *Malo passu*, or a bad pass; because the Roman road, which is supposed to have passed this way, was rough and hilly; but a more natural derivation is furnished by my friend Mr. Evans, from Malpæes, or a plain within the hills, which exactly corresponds with the situation, it being a plain between hills, and the only plain in the vicinity.

A little beyond Malpas church, I quitted the turnpike road which leads by Lantarnam to Pont y Pool, and followed the route to Caerleon. About midway I mounted a steep and rugged ascent, and looked down on the rich vale, stretching in the form of a bow, with Newport castle and Caerleon church at each extremity, and the venerable mansion of St. Julian's, seated on the feathered banks of the Usk, occupying the middle of the arc. On one side Caerleon appears in a flat, and on the other the narrow and long town of Newport rises along the side of an eminence to the church of St. Woolos, embowered with trees. I rode under an

ancient encampment near the old lodge of Lantarnam park, and passed through the opening which once formed the entrance of *Ifca Silurum*, the residence of the second Augustan legion, and the chief station of the Romans in the country of the Silures, now occupied by the small town of Caerleon, which is seated on the right bank of the *Urk*. There is no occasion to employ many words in proof of these facts; the remains of the walls and amphitheatre, the numerous sculptures, altars, pavements, inscriptions, coins, and other antiquities discovered within the town and the vicinity, evidently prove it the site of a great Roman city. Immense quantities of Roman bricks, stamped with the impression in relief of **LEG II AVG** which still continue to be found, several of which I myself observed, testify that it was the station of the second Augustan legion, during a long course of years.

It is denominated in Antonine's Itinerary, *Ifca Legionis secundæ Augustæ**; by the monk of Ravenna, *Ifca Augusta*; by others, *Ifca Silurum*; and by Richard, *Ifca Colonia*.

The modern name of Caerleon is generally supposed to be derived from *Caer*, the British word for a fortified city, and *Leon*, a corruption of *Legionum*, meaning the city of the legions. But this derivation is denied by Mr. Owen†, author of the *Welsh Dictionary*, and one of the best British linguists: he affirms its British name to be *Caer Llion*, or the city of the waters; this etymology is not inapplicable to its situation on the banks of a tide river which rises very high, and near the *Avon Lwyd*, a torrent inundating the country.

Giraldus Cambrensis gives a brilliant account of its ruins in the twelfth century: "Many remains of its former magnificence are still visible; splendid palaces which once emulated with their gilded roofs‡ the grandeur of Rome, for it was originally built by the Roman princes, and adorned with stately edifices; a gigantic

* In Horley's copy it was written *Ifca Legua Augusta*, plainly a corruption for *Ifca Legionis Secundæ Augustæ*.

† As I am totally unacquainted with the Welsh tongue, I have thought proper to insert Mr. Owen's ingenious observations in the Appendix.

‡ I suspect that these gilded roofs were taken from Geoffrey of Monmouth's description of Caerleon in the time of king Arthur: "The magnificence of the royal palaces, with lofty gilded roofs that adorned it, made it even rival the grandeur of Rome." B. ix. c. 12. Mr.

tic tower, numerous baths, ruins of temples, and a theatre, the walls of which are partly standing. Here we still see, both within and without the walls, subterraneous buildings, aqueducts, and vaulted caverns; and what appeared to me most remarkable, stoves so excellently contrived, as to diffuse their heat through secret and imperceptible pores*."

The present ruins, however, are extremely inconsiderable, and consist only of walls, and the excavation of the amphitheatre. The form and size of the ancient town may be discovered by the line of the walls, which though in many places dilapidated, and in others covered with buildings, have been traced by Mr. Evans: with his kind assistance I examined their site, and am enabled to present to the public an accurate plan of the town, taken by Mr. Morrice.

The shape of the fortress appears to be oblong, inclining to a square; three of the sides are strait, and the fourth, like the northern wall of Caerwent, curvilinear: the sides are of different dimensions, and inclose a circumference of about 1800 yards; the corners are gently rounded, like most of the Roman stations in Britain, and the four angles nearly correspond with the cardinal points of the compass.

We commenced our survey at the southern angle, near the extremity of the Round Table field, where the walls exhibit the most striking remains of their ancient structure; their present elevation is in no place more than fourteen feet, which is considerably less than their original height: their greatest thickness between eleven and twelve,

The

Mr. Evans has suggested to me, that this expression of gilded roofs, though exaggerated, was descriptive of the splendid appearance of the Roman tiles. A few years ago, a mass of broken tiles was discovered in the garden of Mr. Richard Hay: by comparing the fragments, they had nearly the same dimensions and concave form as our common pantiles; they appeared to have been glazed with a semi-transparent brown substance, similar to the lacker used by japaners; under this varnish was a sprinkling of white sand, which when enlightened by the rays of the sun, exhibited a brilliant and yellow hue, not wholly unlike the golden lustre produced by the silver leaf under the lacker in japan trinkets.

* "Dicitur Caerleon urbs legionum, *Caer* enim Britannicè *urbs* vel *castrum* dicitur. Solent quippe legiones à Romanis in insulam transmissæ ibi hyemare, et

inde urbs legionum dicta est. Erat autem hæc urbs antiqua et authentica, et à Romanis olim coëquilibus muris egregie constructa. Videas hic multa pristinae nobilitatis adhuc vestigia: palatia immensa aureis olim tectorum fastidiis Romanos fastus imitantia, eo quod à Romanis principibus primo constructa, et ædificiis egregiis, illustrata fuissent: turrum giganteam: thermas insignes: templorum reliquias, et loca theatralia muris egregiis partim adhuc extantibus, omnia clausa. Reperies ubique tam intra murorum ambitum, quam extra, ædificia subterranea: aquarum ductus hypogeosque meatus. Et quod inter alia notabile censui, stupas undique videas miro artificio confectas, lateralibus quibusdam à præangulis spiraculi viis occulte calorem exhalantibus." Itin. Cam. lib. 1. cap. 5.

M

The walls are more dilapidated than those of Caerwent, but formed in the same manner, with fragments of stone bedded in cement. Near this angle, the mortar, after the Vitruvian method, not uncommon in Italy, is tempered with pounded brick *, particles of which chequer the surface, and are incorporated with the substance. The facings have been mostly removed for the construction of other buildings: those which remain are principally of hewn grit stone.

The south-western side passes the Round Table or amphitheatre, in a direction parallel to the *Urk*, and skirts the lawn of the abbey, now Miss Morgan's house; where part has been rebuilt with the Roman facings, and part remains in its original state. At the northern extremity of the Round Table field, it is intersected by the Broad way, which from its straitness and uniform breadth, appears to have been a street leading from the fortress to the meads on the banks of the river. Here was probably a gateway, which seems to be marked by the elevations at each end of the breach. In crossing the stile on the other side of the Broad way, Mr. Evans pointed out to me a Roman Terminus, used as one of the cap-stones, bearing the inscription *TERMIN*.

From hence the line of wall re-appears, and continues along the Bear-house field, where a foss is quite plain; but only detached masses of wall, fringed with shrubs, are visible.

At the western angle it turns along the side of the Malpas road, to the remains of a gateway leading into Goldcroft common, and proceeds in a direct line, occupied by several cottages and gardens, where the foss is only visible, to the turnpike, near the junction of the *Urk* and Pont y Pool roads.

At the northern angle the wall forms part of the stable of a public house, called the New Inn, trends through several gardens, orchards, and tenements, is occasionally lost in the streets and lanes, becomes again conspicuous in the castle yard, and terminates in the east angle, which projects over the rail road, near the foss of the castle.

The line of wall from this point to the south angle is curvilinear. It passes through the precincts, and skirts the foss of the castle; is intersected by Bridge street,

* This circumstance perhaps led Harris into a mistake, and gave rise to his assertion, that ranges of Roman bricks are visible in the walls of Caerwent and Caerleon.

street, near a gate which has been recently taken down; forms the foundation of the gable end of a house, now occupied by Mr. Andrew Butler; passes through his garden; is lost in a narrow lane, leading to the quay, and re-appears in the adjoining field, gradually rising in height, until it ends in the southern angle.

It appears from this survey, that the foss is only visible on part of the western, and the whole of the northern side. On the other parts it was perhaps unnecessary, from the greater abruptness of the ground, or the traces of it have been obliterated by outworks and buildings.

The four principal gates seem to have been placed in the middle of the four sides. The first in Bridge street, the second at the Broad way, the third leading into the Newport high road, which was the site of the Julia Strata, and the fourth into Mill street, through which the Roman road passed to Gobannium or Abergavenny.

There is a striking peculiarity in the situation of the ancient Roman fortress, which has hitherto escaped the notice of travellers, and would have escaped mine, had not Mr. Evans pointed it out to me. Caerleon appears on a superficial view to occupy a flat position, but in fact, that portion of the present town, which is inclosed by the Roman walls, is placed on a gentle rise, connected at one extremity with the lower part of the eminence, on which the encampment of the Lodge is situated. This rise shelves on the west and south sides towards the Usk, and on the east towards the Avon Lwyd, and seems to have formed a tongue of land, which before the draining of the meadows, was probably a kind of peninsula. Hence the fortress, from its position on a rise between two rivers, and almost surrounded with marshy ground, was a place of considerable strength, and well calculated to become the primary station of the Romans in Britannia Secundæ.

The æra in which the Roman fortress was built, cannot be ascertained with precision; conjectures may be formed, and Horsley, whose opinion deserves great weight, supposes that the Romans first settled here in the reign of Antoninus Pius. It is mentioned in Antonine's Itinerary; and the numerous coins of the

early emperors, which have been here discovered, seem to confirm this opinion. The walls however appear to have been constructed under the lower empire.

According to Richard of Cirencester, Caerleon was a Roman colony, and the primary station in the country of the Silures; circumstances which sufficiently account for its extent and magnificence.

In a field close to the banks of the Uſk, and near the south-west side of the wall, is an oval concavity, measuring seventy-four yards by sixty-four, and six in depth. The sides are gently sloping, and covered, as well as the bottom, with turf. It is called by the natives Arthur's Round Table; but is undoubtedly the site of a Roman amphitheatre. According to the prevailing opinion, it was merely a campeſtrian amphitheatre, hollowed in the ground, and surrounded with banks of earth, in the sides of which turf seats were formed for the spectators. This opinion is however disproved by the express assertions of Giraldus, who describes the walls as standing in his time. The author of the Secret Memoirs of Monmouthshire also observes, "in 1706 a figure of Diana, with her tresses and crescent, moulded in alabaſter, was found *near a prodigious foundation wall of freestone, on the south side of King Arthur's Round Table, which was very wide, and supposed to be one side of a Roman amphitheatre.*" Within the memory likewise of many persons now living, stone seats were discovered on opening the sides of the concavity.

That part of Caerleon inclosed by the walls, was the site of the ancient camp or fortress; but the suburbs extended to a considerable distance. As I walked along the banks of the Uſk, beyond the Bear-house field, near half a mile to the west of the town, I observed great quantities of Roman bricks and hollow tiles. These suburbs are said to have occupied both sides of the river. According to tradition, they comprised a circumference of not less than nine miles, and reached as far as Christchurch and St. Julian's; and the village on the southern side of the bridge, still bears the old Roman name of *Ultra Pontem*. Large foundations have likewise been discovered in the elevated grounds to the north and north-west of the walls, particularly beyond the skirts of Goldcroft common.

Most

Most of the Roman antiquities discovered at Caerleon have been removed from the place. The only specimens now remaining, are a few coins in the possession of Miss Morgan, which on account of her absence I could not inspect; a rude sculpture, in basso relievo, of a Venus Marina holding a dolphin in her hand, of which Mr. Wyndham has given an etching in his tour, and an antique intaglio.

This intaglio is a cornelian seal set like a ring, and representing the figure of Hercules strangling the Nemean lion. It is very small, but not ill executed. According to Mr. Wyndham, who saw it soon after it was discovered, and extols its workmanship, it belonged to Mr. Norman, maltster. Mr. Strange says, that it was found in digging the foundation of a cellar, opposite the White Hart public house. An engraving of it is given in the *Archæologia*. It is now the property of Mr. Nichols, a gentleman resident at Caerleon, who readily permitted the inspection, and to whom I was indebted, not only for his polite attentions, but for much information, which he was so obliging as to communicate. Pritchett the shoemaker, who possessed the large hollow tile, which Mr. Wyndham describes as part of a sarcophagus, was alive at the time of my first journey to Caerleon. He was eighty-five, and died in the winter of 1798. He informed me, that in digging his garden, he had discovered many coins and rings, all of which he had disposed of; among the coins he mentioned a Julius Cæsar, and a Drusilla, in high preservation. The shape of the tile is given in the following sketch: It is 23 inches in length, and 16 in its greatest breadth.



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The four columns of freestone which support the market-house, probably belonged to some Roman structure. They are of the Tuscan order, low and massive. In repairing the streets of Caerleon, about 1784, two bases of the same dimensions, materials, and workmanship as those of the columns, were discovered near the house now occupied by Mr. Blanning, which stands close to the ancient walls*.

In digging some foundations, three cap-stones of a cornice, which appeared to have been placed at the angle of a building, were discovered. According to Mr. Evans, who examined them, they were of freestone, and scarcely inferior, in elegance of workmanship, to the angular cornices in the ruins of Palmyra. These fragments have been considered by some persons as parts of the ancient cathedral; but were most probably the remains of a splendid Roman temple.

Great quantities of Roman bricks, coins, and jasper tesserae, or the square dies which formed the mosaic pavements, have been found at St. Julian's and Penros, and seem to point out those places as the site of some magnificent mansions. They were probably the villas of the Roman præfects, or generals. This opinion, suggested by Mr. Evans, is corroborated by the vestiges of two causeways; one leading to Pont Saturn, in the road to Penros, and the other through the wood of St. Julian's.

According to the conjectures of some antiquaries, the Broad way led to the ancient quay; and this opinion has been supported by accounts of iron rings and staples for moorings, fixed in the rocks on the opposite bank. But I could not learn that the smallest vestiges of foundations, indicating the existence of a quay, were ever discovered in these parts; and the accounts of rings and staples, are mere idle and traditionary reports†.

The gardens and orchards of Caerleon, are strewed with innumerable quantities of cinders, containing much iron, which are called by the natives Roman cinders,

* From Mr. Evans, who examined and measured them.

† The absurdity of these reports is evident, as no iron can resist the corrosion of the marine salt for ten years, much less for 1300. Should any such rings or

staples have been found, towards the latter end of the last century, they must have been stays for fishing boats; because *there* was the principal fishery on the river Usk, when the Herberts possessed St. Julian's,

cinders, and are considered as pieces of ore, imperfectly smelted by the Romans. These fragments are found in many places which were occupied by the Romans; before the introduction of the Lancashire ore, they were conveyed to the iron works, and by means of the improved state of modern machinery, yielded a considerable portion of metal. In some parts of Monmouthshire, not far removed from the iron works, the profit drawn from the Roman cinders has almost defrayed the purchase of the land.

Without the Roman fortrefs, we traced several outworks of considerable strength. Near the eastern angle in Mill street, are remains of a line of ancient wall, with the foundation of a gateway, running nearly parallel to the Roman fortifications; but not sufficient to ascertain their purport.

It is more difficult to trace the ruins of the celebrated castle, which resisted so many assaults, while the town, notwithstanding its Roman fortifications, surrendered to each invader. The castle works extended in a line between the south side of the wall and the *Usk*, beyond a round tower near the Hanbury Arms, and terminated at the remains of two round towers or bastions, which were built upon the rocks on the verge of the river. According to *Domesday book*, there was a castle in Caerleon at the time of the conquest. Parts of the ancient works still remain, particularly the tower near the Hanbury Arms, which exhibits in its circularly arched doorway, and embrasures, the early style of fortification: it is now pierced with modern windows, and much altered from its original state. The thickness of the walls, the bold sweep of the arches, and the composition of the cement, according to the Vitruvian method, have led some persons to suppose it a Roman structure, which was afterwards included in the works of the castle.

There are no apparent remains of the tower called by Giraldus *gigantic*; but the mound on which it was constructed is still entire. It is an artificial eminence of considerable height, 300 yards in circumference at the base, and 90 at the summit; it stands between the banks of the *Usk*, and the southern side of the wall, and is generally supposed to be the site of the Norman keep or citadel, and posterior to the other works. In the time of Leland the ruins were very

considerable; and Churchyard, who wrote in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, described it, as

“ A castle very old,
 “ That may not be forgot,
 “ It stands upon a forced hill,
 “ Not far from flowing flood*.”

In the middle of this century, the walls of the tower were not less than forty feet in height; but they were loosened by the severe effects of the frost in 1739, and fell down in enormous fragments †. Within the memory of the oldest inhabitants were remains of dilapidated buildings at the bottom, and a flight of stone steps. During my last excursion, some massive foundations were discovered towards the summit. The greater part had been removed by the lord of the manor, and sold to Mr. Williams, a currier, who had built a house with the materials. The remains which I observed were not less than twenty feet in depth, ten in breadth, and thirty in length; the whole forming a solid and compact mass, of large stones bedded in mortar, which the workmen had great difficulty in separating. I noticed among the fragments, much slate, many glazed pantiles, and numerous pieces of burnt and charred wood, which seem to imply, that part of the building had been destroyed by fire.

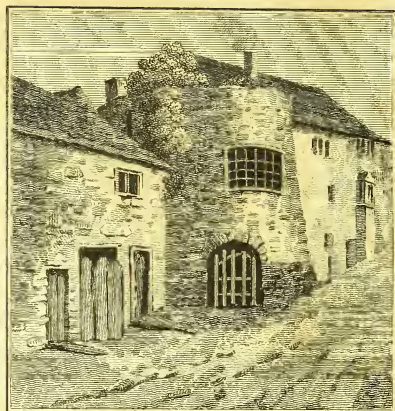
From the top of this eminence, the wild and beautiful environs of Caerleon are seen to the greatest advantage. The principal objects are the town, gently rising at the extremity of an oval vale; the bridge, supported by lofty and slender piles; the rapid Usk, flowing through fertile meadows; the sloping hills, richly clothed with wood; and Christchurch, towering like a cathedral, on the brow of an overhanging eminence.

Descending from the mount, and tracing the fofs, I observed, towards its south-western side, heaps of Roman bricks and tiles, which had been recently dug up in making excavations. Among these were some fragments of large
 bricks,

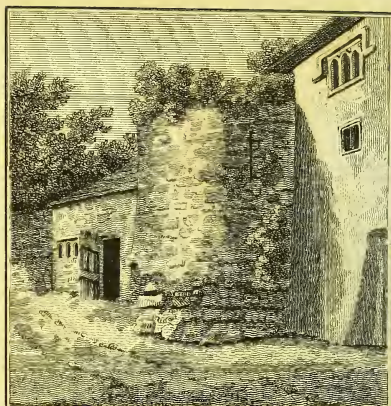
* The Worthines of Wales. p. 24.

† The late Mr. Thomas Norman told Mr. Evans, that his father used when a boy, at the latter end of the last century, to mount the summit of the walls,

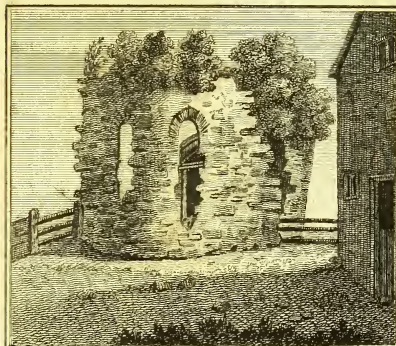
and could see from thence the hills of Somerset, over the Severn. His father's name was Walter Norman, and he died extremely old, about the year 1762.



FRONT VIEW OF THE ROUND TOWER NEAR THE HANBURY ARMS



BACK VIEW OF ROUND TOWER.



RUINS NEAR THE BRIDGE.



REMAINS OF THE CASTLE WORKS NEAR THE USK.



T. Tudor del.

SOUTH ANGLE OF THE ROMAN WALLS AT CAERLEON.

W. B. Davis sc.

bricks, two feet square, and two inches in thickness. They formed part of a Roman sarcophagus, which measured six feet and a half in length. It was found on the side of the mount, several feet above the ground; and Mr. Blanning, who politely accompanied me, and supplied me with these particulars, pointed out the place where it had been discovered, which was apparent from the red colour communicated by the bricks to the surface. The situation of this sarcophagus seems to indicate, that the lower part of the mount existed in the time of the Romans, and was a continuation of a natural ridge, which stretches nearly the same height, not far from the banks of the *Usk*, and that the upper part was raised, since the deposition of the sarcophagus, to its present elevation.

In the street leading from the bridge, and near the passage to the castle, are the ruins of a portal, which seems to have once formed the entrance of the castle works. Parts of a round tower still remain, with the groove for a portcullis, and a public house called the Gate-house marks its situation*.

Close to the southern extremity of the bridge, in the district sometimes called the village of Caerleon, and sometimes distinguished by the Roman appellation of *Ultra Pontem*, are the ruins of an ancient fort, intended for the purpose of guarding the passage over the river. Grose has given an engraving as it existed in 1778, and from the roundness of the arches and the mode of construction, concludes that it was a Roman edifice; but the dilapidated state of the work renders it difficult to ascertain its exact form or æra.

As it was the invariable custom of the Romans to construct fortified camps near their principal stations, for airing the troops, exploratory purposes, securing convoys, and guarding cattle, we should expect to find traces of their ancient encampments in the neighbourhood of Caerleon. The remains of four encampments, two on the north and two on the south side of the *Usk*, are still visible in the vicinity; but neither of them seems to bear a positive Roman character.

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* At the time of my last excursion these remains were taking down,

The most remarkable of these is the encampment of the Lodge, in the old park of Lantarnam, near a mile to the north-west of Caerleon, anciently called *BELLINGSTOCKE*, which is supposed by Harris to have been the æstiva or summer camp of the second legion: it is of an oval, or rather an elliptical shape, large dimensions, and surrounded with double ramparts, excepting to the south-west, where there a quadruple line of ramparts and ditches *. The entrenchments are in some places not less than thirty feet in depth. The entrance is to the west, and defended by a tumulus, twelve yards in height, which is placed on the inner rampart. It bears more the appearance of a British, than of a Roman encampment; and if I may be allowed a conjecture, was the site of the British town on the arrival of the Romans. This conjecture is strengthened by the authority of an ancient chronicle † of the kings of the isle of Britain, which mentions the existence of a British town built by Beli, on the banks of the Wyfc, or Ufk.

Probably

* For the plan of this and the three other camps, see the annexed Engraving.

† In the *Myvyrian Archæology of Wales*, as Mr. Owen informs me, are three copies of this chronicle, called *Brut Breninod ynys Prydain*, collated and printed on the same page. He was so obliging as to favour me with a translation of a passage of each.

From the Second Copy.

“ After obtaining that victory, Bran remained emperor in Rome, subduing the people through unheard of cruelty; and whosoever would know his acts, and his end, the histories of the men of Rome declare them; therefore have I refrained from them; for too much length and tediousness should I give to this work, if I were to write them; and I should be departing from my own plan and work by so doing. And then Beli returned to the isle of Britain; and through peace and tranquillity he completed the days of his life, and governed the country. And he repaired the fortresses that had decayed; and built other new ones; and in those times amongst others of his acts, he built a fortress on the river Wyfc, near the sea of Havren, which was called through a length of time *Caer Wyfc*, and that was the archbishop-house of Dyved; and

after the coming of the men of Rome into the island, that name was done away, and it was called *Caer Llion*, for there they were wont to dwell in the winter.”

First Copy.

“ He built a fortress on the banks of the river Wyfc, and there was the archbishop-house of Dyved (*Dimetia*). And after the coming of the men of Rome into this island, it came to be called *Caerllion*, for there they were wont to remain during the winter.”

Third Copy.

“ And then he built a fortress and city on the river Wyfc, which was called through a long time *Caer Wyfc*; and there afterwards was the third archbishoprick of the isle of Britain; and after the coming of the men of Rome to this island, it was called *Caer Llion* or *Wyfc*.” See also a similar passage in *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, Book iii. Chap. 10. An ancient manuscript, being a catalogue of the most renowned kings of Britain, founders of cities, contains the following passage, communicated likewise by Mr. Owen: “ Beli the son of *Dynwal Moel Mud*, made a city on the banks of the river Wyfc, and he called it *Caer Llion* on Wyfc; and that was anciently the principal town in the island.”

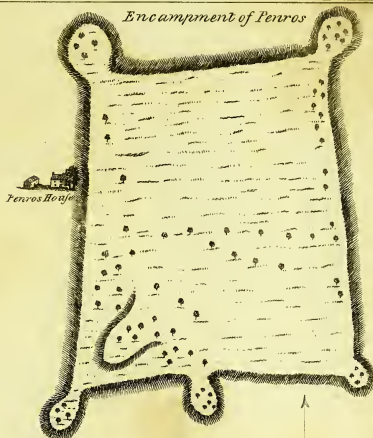
Encampment of the Lodge



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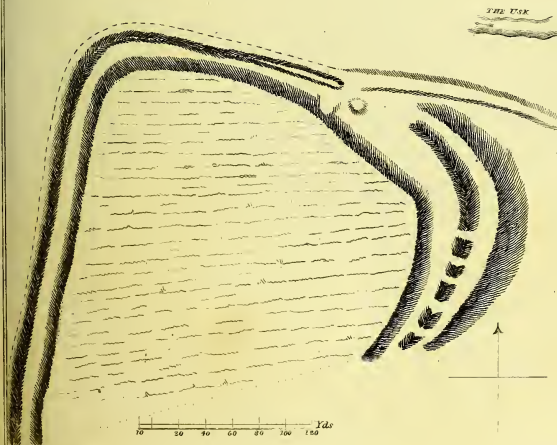
Encampment of Penros



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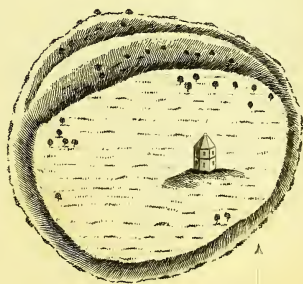
Encampment of S^t Julians



10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130 140 150 Yds



Encampment above Mayndee House



10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 Yds



Probably this British fortress afterwards became a summer camp of the Romans, was again a strong post of the Britons on their departure, and subsequently occupied by the different nations who besieged Caerleon. The depth of the ditches, and height of the vallum, seem to indicate a Saxon station, as their camps are distinguished by those peculiarities. Perhaps Harold, on his conquest of lower Gwent, here established himself when he invested Caerleon, as it was a place of great importance, either for the defence or attack of the town. The Normans likewise did not omit to seize this post, called by Churchyard "*Caerleon's hope* *," in the numerous assaults which Caerleon sustained in feudal times.

The second encampment, on the north side of the Usk, is at Penros, an eminence above the Avon Lwyd, to the north-east of Caerleon; it is environed only by a single rampart, and the form is nearly square, with five bastions. From the remains found at Penros, it may have been also the site of a Roman camp, which was altered and strengthened with bastions during the civil wars of the last century.

The third encampment, to the south of the Usk, is near the high road leading from Caerwent to Newport, above Mayndee, the seat of William Kemeys, esq. who has erected a summer-house in the midst of the area, which commands a singular and beautiful prospect. It is a small circular entrenchment, and could only be calculated for exploratory purposes, or guarding cattle.

The fourth camp is in the wood of St. Julian's, above the Usk. As I was several times prevented by bad weather from visiting it, I shall only observe, that from the plan and description given by Mr. Morrice, who took the survey, it was probably a Saxon encampment, formed by Harold to command the river, and to cut off all communication between Caerleon and the south, as the camp at the Lodge did to the north. It certainly could never be intended as a defence of Caerleon, because the farthest side has no rampart or ditch, and is only secured by a natural ravine, at some distance from the camp. It must have been often occupied by the Anglo Normans, who frequently besieged and possessed themselves of Caerleon.

* Worthines of Wales, p. 43.

CHAPTER II.

History of Caerleon after the Departure of the Romans.—King Arthur.—Knights of the Round Table.—Church of St. Cadoc.—Ancient Abbey.—Castle.—Modern History, and present State of Caerleon.—Bridge.—Singular Escape of Mrs. Williams.

SOON after the departure of the Romans from Britain, the reports of tradition and the pages of romance, have assigned to Caerleon a still greater splendour and importance than under their domination. It is supposed to have been the metropolis of the British empire; the favourite residence of the renowned king Arthur, and his knights of the round table.

Arthur is said to have flourished in the sixth century, and is usually called the fourth of that race of kings, who are known by the name of the Armorican line, and from whom the inhabitants of Britain are styled Armorican Britons. Although numerous authors of great talents have written in favour of Arthur, and many historians have assented to the proofs which they have advanced, yet their opinions are discordant and contradictory. They only agree in supporting his existence, but differ in the most material circumstances of his lineage, birth, life, and death. The incredible accounts of the British hero given by Geoffrey of Monmouth, have cast an air of fable over his real exploits, and rendered even his existence suspected.

The natives of Caerleon however, are not inclined to this opinion: they point out the remains of the Roman amphitheatre, under the name of Arthur's Round Table, from a supposition that a military order was here instituted, which first raised the spirit of chivalry in Europe. Arthur and his knights are recorded to have held their feasts within the precincts of this area, seated at a round table, for the purpose of promoting social intercourse, and superseding the distinctions

of state. But this legend has no foundation in history ; and the articles of the order, which have been gravely quoted as authentic, display an internal evidence of forgery ; they contain notions of chivalry, honour, and gallantry, which did not in that age prevail in any country of Europe *.

The number of these heroes is no less uncertain than their history ; they increase as rapidly as Falstaff's men of buckram. Some, with Dryden, in the beautiful fable of the flower and the leaf, limit the number to twelve :

“ Who bear the bow were knights in Arthur's reign ;

“ TWELVE they, and twelve the knights of Charlemagne.”

Others make them twenty-four ; while the ballad of the noble acts of king Arthur extends their number from fifty to sixty-five :

“ Then into Britain strait he came,

“ Where fifty good and able

“ Knights then repaired unto him,

“ Which were of the round table.”

But afterwards, speaking of sir Launcelot du Lake, it is said :

“ Who has in prison THREESCORE knights,

“ And FOUR that he had wound ;

“ Knights of king Arthur's court they be,

“ And of his table round.”

Boisseau, in his *Promptuaire Armoriale*, after reciting the names of the first twenty-four knights, mentions one hundred and twenty-nine more, and gives a formal blazon of their arms.

On the death of Arthur, the order was supposed to be extinguished ; for it is related, that most of his knights companions in arms perished in the fatal battle of Camblun, where he received his mortal wound. The order fell into disrepute among the Saxons, but abroad a new phoenix arose from its ashes, and produced the twelve peers and *table ronde* of Charlemagne.

On

* Such as to advance the reputation of honour, to deliver prisoners, to ransom captives, to revenge all complaints made at the court of their mighty king, of perjury and oppression, to protect widows and maids, to avenge the injuries or dishonour offered

to ladies, gentlewomen, widows, or maids, and to inform young princes, lords, and gentlemen, in the orders and exercises of arms, for the purpose of avoiding idleness, and increasing the honour of knight-hood or chivalry. Enderbie.

On the Norman conquest, and the overthrow of the Saxon dominion, king Arthur's memory acquired fresh renown in England. The round table rose into great estimation, and was introduced at the grand martial exercises called *hastiludes*, tilts, or tournaments, which were much encouraged by king Richard the first, "as well" as *Ashmole* says, "for the delight of men inclined to military actions, and increasing of their skill in their management of arms, as in memorial or remembrance, that Arthur had erected an order of knighthood *." The custom was adopted by king Stephen, and continued by several of his successors. Edward the first, in particular, gave a new splendour to the solemnity, when, on the conquest of Wales, he fixed his temporary residence at Caernarvon: with a view to conciliate the affections of his new subjects, who fondly cherished the memory of Arthur, and superstitiously believed that he would re-appear, and establish the seat of empire at Caerleon †, he held a round table, and celebrated it with dance and tournament.

At length Edward the third, an illustrious example and patron of chivalry, availed himself of the high notions entertained of Arthur and the knights of the round table, to establish a similar fraternity. He kept a solemn tournament at his beloved Windfor, received the knights who flocked from all quarters of Europe at a round table, and ordered the solemnity to be repeated at Windfor every Whitsuntide. The splendour of this meeting, and the consequence which Edward derived from it in every court of Europe, induced also Philip of Valois to hold a round table at Paris. This competition inflamed the spirit of chivalry, increased the reputation of the round table, and occasioned the institution of the order of the garter; intended, according to the spirit of the times, "to adorn martial virtue with honour, rewards, and splendour ‡."

Caerleon

* *Ashmole's History of the Order of the Garter.*

† The romances of the bards were filled with predictions that Arthur was not dead, but would return again and re-establish the British empire, to which Daniel Lydgate alludes:

"He is a king crowned in Faerie,
"With scepter and sword, and with his regalty,
"Shall resort our lord and sovereigne,
"Out of Faerie and reigne in Brittain;

"And repaire again the round table.

"By prophecy Merlin set the date,

"Among princes king incomparable,

"His seat again Caerlion to translate,

"The parc has sufferen sponne so his fate,

"His epitaph recordeth so certaine,

"Herelieth king Arthur that shall raigne againe."

‡ *Ashmole's History of the Order of the Garter.*
Selden's Notes on Drayton's Poly Albion. Warton's

Caerleon has also been described as no less pre-eminent in learning, than in extent and magnificence. On the authority of an ancient author, Alexander Elfebienfis, and of Geoffrey of Monmouth, Caerleon is said to have contained, at the time of the first Saxon invasion, a school of two hundred astronomers. These idle assertions are credited even by Camden; and an obscure inscription in the church of Usk *, has been perverted into an epitaph on Seliff Sunjwr, the Solomon of these astronomers.

Caerleon is equally pre-eminent in the annals of the church: here St. Julius and St. Aaron are said to have suffered martyrdom, and two chapels were erected to their honour; one near the present site of St. Julian's, to which it communicated the name, and the other at Penros, in the vicinity of the town. A third chapel was dedicated to St. Alban, another martyr, which was constructed on an eminence to the east of Caerleon, overlooking the Usk. A yew tree marks the site; an adjoining piece of land is still called the chapel yard, and in 1785 several stone coffins were discovered in digging for the foundations of a new house.

In its splendid days, Caerleon enjoyed the honour of being the metropolitan see of Wales. According to the annals of the church, Dubricius, the great opponent of the Pelagian heresy, was the first archbishop. He was succeeded by St. David, called by bishop Godwin uncle of king Arthur, and son of Zanc'tus, a prince of Wales, who removed the see from Caerleon to Menevia, which from him was called St. David's. The reason for this translation, and the extraordinary accounts of his sanctity, are detailed by bishop Godwin †.

No

Essay on English Poetry, passim. History of Windfor.

* See chapter 14.

† " It seemeth he misliked the frequency of people at Caerlegion, as a means to withdraw him from contemplation; whereunto that he might be more free, he made choice of this place for a see, rather than for any fitnessse of the same otherwise. He sate long, to witte, 65 yeeres, and died at last ann. 642, (having first built twelve monasteries in the country there-

about) being now 146 yeeres of age, as Bale out of the British histories reporteth. He was buried in his owne cathedrall church, and many hundreth yeeres after canonised a saint by pope Calixtus the second. Many things are reported of him incredible, and therefore not worth rehearsing, although I doubt not but God afforded many miracles to the first infancy of our church; neither therefore would I be so peremptory in derogating too much from such reports, as we see no reason why they may not be true. Of him they say, that his birth

No remains of the ancient cathedral exist. The present church was constructed in the Norman æra, and is dedicated to St. Cadoc, from whom it is called in Welsh, Langattoc, or the church of St. Cadoc*. It is built with coarse materials, and plastered, and consists of a nave, two aisles and chancel; the tower is high and massive. The inside exhibits an elegant specimen of gothic architecture; and the old clerk exultingly told me, that the bishop of Landaff at one of his visitations, had called it the handsomest church in his diocese. He likewise pointed out to me a large bone with an inscription: "This bone is part of a rib which has been preserved in this church many years." He boasted that it was part of the rib of the dun cow slain by Guy earl of Warwick; but in fact it is half the rib of a small whale.

On expressing my satisfaction at the beauty and neatness of the church, the old clerk expatiated on the bounty of Mr. Williams, a native of Caerleon, who bequeathed £.1,000 for the purpose of repairing it, and to whose memory the natives are much attached for the establishment of a free-school.

Charles Williams, esq. was born and educated at Caerleon, and lived in his native town, until an unfortunate rencontre with his cousin Mr. Morgan of Penros, which terminated in the death of the latter, compelled him to quit his country. He fled to Smyrna, and after acquiring a considerable fortune by trade,

birth was foretold 30 yeeres beforehand; that he was alwaies attended by an angell that kept him company; that he bestowed upon the waters at Bathe that extraordinary heate they have; and (to repeat no more, for this is much more than any discrete man will believe) that upon a time preaching to a great multitude of people at Brevy, the plaine ground grew up in their sight, and increased under his feete unto a pretty hillock." Godwin's Catalogue of the Bishops, p. 414.

* "St. Cadocus, or St. Cadoc, was son to Gunleus or St. Woolos, by his wife Gladusa, daughter of Braghan, whose name was given to the province now called Brecknockshire. On his father's abdication, Cadoc, who was his eldest son, succeeded in the government; but not long after followed his example, and embracing a religious life, put himself under the

direction of St. Tathai, an Irish monk, who had opened a famous school at Gwent, the ancient Venta Silurum of the Romans, afterwards a bishop's see, now in ruins in Monmouthshire. Our saint made such progress both in learning and virtue, that when he returned into Glamorganshire, his own country, he spread on every side the rays of his wisdom and sanctity. Here, three miles from Cowbridge, he built a church and a monastery, which was called Llancarvan; the school that he established in this place, became most illustrious and fruitful in great and holy men. St. Cadoc flourished in the beginning of the sixth century, and was succeeded in the abbacy of Llancarvan by Ellenius, 'an excellent disciple of an excellent master,' says Leland." *Lives of the Saints*, vol. 1. p. 272.

trade, returned to England, in the reign of king William, and lived in London incognito. He increased his fortune by loans to government, and by purchasing in the funds, which were recently established. He died in 1720, aged eighty-seven, and after bequeathing the bulk of his fortune to the family of Hanbury, left considerable legacies for the advantage and improvement of his native town*.

Tanner mentions a cistercian abbey at Caerleon, and observes, that king John, whilst earl of Morton, privileged the abbot and monks to be free of paying toll at Bristol. The quadrangular house belonging to Miss Morgan, and some adjacent tenements, exhibit traces of the ancient structure, in their gothic windows and doorways.

During the middle ages, the history of Caerleon is obscure and uncertain. Notwithstanding its real strength under the Romans, and fabulous consequence in the annals of romance, its name seldom occurs in the pages of history. Although specified in the Triades as one of the thirty-three fortresses of Britain, it is only once mentioned by Caradoc, during the Saxon æra. He relates that Alfred the Great sent his fleet to subdue Caerleon upon Usk, but was obliged to recall it, before he had effected the conquest, on account of the progress of the Danes†. It may have been forced and pillaged by the Saxons in their predatory incursions, and was probably taken by Harold, when he overran this part of Gwent, and built his palace at Portscwit.

At the time of the conquest, there is much doubt and uncertainty concerning its real situation. According to *Domesday Book*, William de Scohies ‡, a great

* See the chapter on Pont y Pool, and on the Memoirs of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams.

† Powell's Translation, p. 87.

‡ Caerleon is twice mentioned in *Domesday Book*, the first time in the article of Gloucestershire, from which it should seem, that the revenues of Caerleon, one carucate of land there, and seven fisheries in the Wye and the Usk, produced 7*l.* 10*s.* "Ints redditionem de Carleion et I. carrucatam quæ ibi est, et VII. piscarias in Waie et Hufchæ exeunt VII. lib. et X. solid." p. 162. It is again mentioned under Herefordshire; among the lands possessed by William de Scohies are

eight carucates within the precincts of the castle of Caerleon.

Terra Witts de Scohies.

Witts de Scohies tenet VIII. caracutas terræ in Castellaria de Carlion et Turstin tenet de illo. Ibi habet in dominio unam caracutam, et III. Walenses lege Walensi viventes cum III. caracutis et II. bordariis cum dimedio caracutæ et reddit. IIII. sextars mellis. Ibi II. servi et una ancilla.

Hæc terra wasta erat temporæ regis Edwardi et quando Wilhelmus recepit modo val XL. sol.

a great Norman chieftain, held of the crown part of the demesnes belonging to the castle of Caerleon, which are called waste lands in the time of Edward the Confessor; but whether he occupied the castle, or possessed the entire lordship of Caerleon is not ascertained.

Soon after this period the history becomes less doubtful. Before the construction of the castle at Newport, there was no other fortress of considerable strength between Chepstow and Caerdiff; Caerleon, therefore, was the object of contention between the English and Welsh, and secured to its possessor the dominion of an extensive region. It was for some time the residence of the line of petty chiefs who were descended from Griffith prince of South Wales, and styled themselves kings of Gwent, and lords of Caerleon: at another time it was wrested from them, and became the seat of the Anglo-Norman barons. Being repeatedly demolished in these destructive contentions, the citadel was built by the Anglo-Normans, which rendered the castle a stronger and more permanent place of defence; and frequent accounts of its obstinate resistance are recorded in the annals of the times.

Towards the beginning of the twelfth century, Caerleon was possessed by Owen surnamed Wan, or the feeble, from whom it was conquered by Robert de Chandos, founder of Goldcliff Priory. According to an old deed cited by Dugdale, among other possessions, he assigned to the monks the tythes of a mill and an orchard at Caerleon, together with the churches of St. Julius, St. Aaron, and St. Alban, and their appurtenances*. From Robert de Chandos Caerleon was recovered by Jorwerth and Morgan the sons of Owen; was afterwards taken by William earl of Gloucester and lord of Newport, but again re-conquered by Jorwerth.

Caradoc describes it as an object of contention between Jorwerth and Henry the second, who in his progress to Ireland in 1171, seized and garrisoned the town and castle. In a subsequent year, Henry being involved in a contest with his sons, Jorwerth invested Caerleon, and after an obstinate resistance forced the town,

* There is an obscurity in this passage, which seems to imply, that there was but one church dedicated to the three saints; "et ecclesiam sancti Julii et Aaron atque Alban, cum pertinenciis suis." Dugdale's *Monasticon*, vol. 2. p. 904.

town, and obtained by composition the surrender of the castle. Animated with this success, his son Howel reduced the greater part of Nether-went, and compelled the inhabitants to withdraw their allegiance from the king of England. Jorwerth, however, did not long enjoy this independance, for he was treacherously seized by Rhys prince of South Wales, and conveyed to the king at Gloucester. Henry treated his prisoner with unexpected clemency, and Jorwerth, after doing homage, had livery of the castle and lordship of Caerleon*.

Being again alternately occupied and ravaged by both parties, Caerleon was not permanently possessed by the English, until the reduction of Wales by Edward the first; when the puissant family of Clare re-entered into possession, in virtue of their descent from Amicia, sole daughter and heiress of William earl of Gloucester. It came by the female line in the same manner as the castle of Usk, through the great family of Mortimer earl of March, to Richard duke of York, whose right and title to the lordship of Caerleon, are proved in a curious deed cited by Dugdale†. From him it descended to his sons Edward the fourth and Richard the third, and continued for some time in the crown. The lordship of Caerleon was afterwards possessed by the branch of the Morgan family seated at Lantarnam, was left by one of the coheiresses of that family to John Howe, esq. father of the first lord Chedworth, purchased by Mr. Burgh, and conveyed by his niece to Mr. Blanning, the present proprietor.

According to tradition, the lordship of Caerleon once extended as far as the neighbourhood of Chepstow, comprehending the chase of Wentwood, and other tracts of woodland and pasture; and although gradually diminished by the revolutions of property, even now stretches in a narrow strip almost as far as Caerwent.

The town of Caerleon is reduced, from its ancient extent and grandeur, to

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* Caradoc's History of Wales, by Powell, p. 197. to p. 203.

† Dugdale's Monasticon, vol. 2. p. 904. "Titulus Ricardi ducis Ebor, ad dominium de Karlyon, et patronagium prioratus de Goldclyffe." This deed enumerates the lords of Caerleon from Owen Wan to Elizabeth de Burgh, sister of Gilbert de Clare, last

earl of Gloucester, from whom Richard duke of York was lineally descended. See also Carta Regis Edwardi I. confirmans donationem Roberti de Chandos, vol. 1. p. 590. and Carta Regis Johannis, p. 591. See the pedigree of the descendants of Gilbert the first earl of Gloucester, in the chapter on Usk.

an inconsiderable place. Since the removal of the port to Newport, it is no longer the center of trade and communication, and was scarcely visited even by travellers, until Mr. Wyndham first excited curiosity by the publication of his tour in Wales.

The number of inhabitants, including the village, or *Ultra Pontem*, amounts to no more than 763 *. The town contains no manufactures; but is greatly benefited by the tin works of Mr. Butler, which are established in the vicinity. These works are capable of manufacturing annually from 14,000 to 20,000 boxes of tin plates, containing each from 200 to 300 plates. Iron plates are rolled, also patent iron rods, ship bolts, and square iron bars. The machinery of the mill is worthy of notice: it is wholly of iron; the two fly wheels, with the water wheel and their combined powers, weigh seventy-five tons, and make forty-five revolutions in one minute. It is proposed to annex another system of powers to the same water wheel, by which a weight of twenty tons will be added, and the whole will revolve with the same velocity.

The wooden bridge over the *Ufk* may be considered as similar to that erected by the Romans; the frame is not unlike the carpentry of Cæsar's bridge over the Rhine, which he has described in his *Commentaries*, and of which Stukeley has given a plan, in the second volume of his *Itinerarium Curiosum*. The floor, supported by ten lofty piers, is level, and divided by posts and rails into rooms or beds of boards, each twelve feet in length; the apparently loose and disjointed state of the planks, and the clattering noise which they make, under the pressure of a heavy weight, have not unfrequently occasioned alarm to those who are unused to them. Some travellers, from a superficial view of the structure, have asserted that the planks are placed loose, to admit the tide through their interstices when it rises above the bridge, and which would, if they were fixed, force them from the frame and carry them away. But in fact the tide has never been known to rise above the bridge, nor was the flooring constructed to obviate this inconvenience. Formerly the planks were fastened at each extremity with iron nails; but the wood being liable to split, and the

* From Mr. Evans.



THE TOWN OF CAERLEON ON THE RIVER USK.

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the nails frequently forced up, by the elastic agitation of the beams, under the pressure of heavy carriages, the planks were secured from rising by horizontal rails, fastened to the posts, and prevented from slipping sideways, by a peg at each end, within the rail.

The height of the water, at extraordinary tides, exceeds thirty feet, but though it has never risen above the floor, yet the united body of a high tide, and the floods to which the Ufk is subject, have been known to carry away parts of the bridge. An accident of this kind which happened on the 29th of October 1772, occasioned a singular event, to which I should not have given credit, had it not been authenticated by the most respectable testimony.

As Mrs. Williams, wife of Mr. Edward Williams, brazier, was returning from the village of Caerleon to the town, at eleven o'clock at night, with a candle and lantern, the violence of the current forced away four piers, and a considerable part of the bridge. On a fragment of this mass, consisting of an entire room, with the beams, posts, and flooring, she was hurried down the river; but preserved sufficient presence of mind to support herself by the railing. On arriving near St. Julian's, the candle was extinguished; she immediately screamed for help, and was heard by several persons, who started out of their beds to assist her; but the violence of the stream had already hurried her beyond their reach. During this time she felt little apprehension, as she entertained hopes of being delivered by the boatmen of Newport; her expectations were increased by the numerous lights which she discerned in the houses, and she accordingly redoubled her cries for assistance, though without effect.

The fragment on which she stood being broken to pieces against a pier of Newport bridge, she fortunately bestrode a beam, and after being detained for some minutes by the eddies at the bridge, was rapidly hurried along towards the sea. In this perilous situation she resigned herself to her approaching fate, and addressing herself to Heaven, exclaimed, "Oh Lord, I trust in thee, thou alone canst save me."

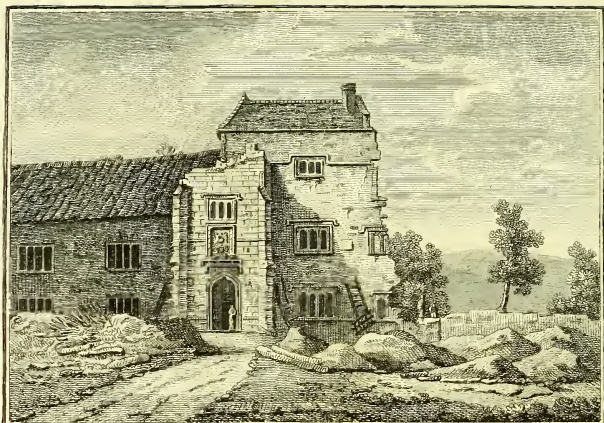
About a mile from Newport, she discerned a glimmering light, in a barge which was moored near the shore, and redoubling her cries, was heard by the
master

master of the vessel. After hailing her, and learning her situation, he cried out "keep up your spirits, and you will soon be out of danger," then leaping into the boat, with one of his men, rowed towards the place from whence the screams proceeded; but some time elapsed before he overtook her, at a considerable distance from the anchorage of his barge. The night was so dark that they could not discern each other, and the surf swelling violently, the master repeated his exhortations, charged her to be calm, and not attempt to quit her station. Fortunately a sudden dispersion of the clouds, enabled him to lash the beam fore and aft to the boat. At this moment, however, her presence of mind forsook her, and eagerly attempting to throw herself forward she was checked by the oaths of the seamen, who were at length enabled to heave her into the boat; but could not disengage themselves from the beam, till they had almost reached the mouth of the Usk. This being effected, not without great difficulty, they rowed to the shore, and embayed themselves till the first dawn of the morning, when they conveyed her in the boat to Newport.

Though Mrs. Williams was in an advanced state of pregnancy, she received so little injury from this perilous accident, that after a few hours repose she returned to Caerleon.

I have been thus minute in detailing the particulars of this providential escape, because it has been related with so many improbable circumstances, as to occasion doubts of its reality. For the truth of this narrative, I can adduce the testimony of Mr. Jones of Clytha, Mr. Kemeys of Mayndee, and the Rev. Mr. Evans; all of whom soon afterwards conversed with Mrs. Williams. To Mr. Evans in particular, she uniformly repeated the same account, and confirmed it on her death bed, with the most solemn asseverations.

The disinterested conduct of the master and boatman ought not to be omitted: notwithstanding the peril to which they were exposed, and their active exertions, they repeatedly declined the liberal recompense offered by Mr. Williams.



J. B. de la

ST JULIENS.

Published March 2 1860 by G. B. & D. Davies, Strand

W. B. de la



J. B. de la

BACK VIEW OF ST JULIAN'S.

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CHAPTER 12.

St. Julian's.—Memoirs of Lord Herbert of Cherbury.

FROM Caerleon a walk leads through hanging woods and over fertile meadows to St. Julian's, a place once remarkable for the residence of the celebrated lord Herbert of Cherbury; it is situated nearly midway between Caerleon and Newport, on the banks of the Usk. The building, now converted into a farm house, has been lately much reduced from its original size: part of the south front has been modernised, part remains in its former state; and the whole presents a motley combination, which, at the same expence, might have preserved the venerable appearance of the old mansion, and the comforts of a modern house. The ancient gothic porch, which still forms the entrance, is likely to be soon destroyed, according to the plan adopted in the present alterations. The north front, which has been permitted to retain its antique appearance, is a picturesque object, backed by a wooded eminence, and overhanging the abrupt banks of the Usk.

The inside has some remains of former magnificence, particularly in the staircase, and several gothic doorways. Two apartments retain their ancient dimensions, but were about to be converted into smaller rooms: the lower apartment was 36 feet in length, 20 broad, and 17 high; the upper 45 by 20, and of the same height; against the walls are the remains of slender pillars of the gothic style.

Near the house is an old barn of small dimensions, which was once part of the chapel of St. Julius, from whom the place derived its appellation; on the south wall are the remains of an arched entrance, which is now half filled up; the east

and west windows may be traced, and a small gothic doorway to the west, still remains in its original state. According to an ancient tradition, this chapel and mansion were once included within the town of Caerleon*.

Edward Herbert, first lord Herbert of Cherbury, whose fame induced me to visit this place, was the fourth male in lineal descent from sir Richard Herbert of Coldbrook, knight. The estate and mansion of Coldbrook were inherited by sir William Herbert, the eldest son, and continued in the possession of his line. Sir Richard Herbert, second son, was steward of the lordships and marches of North Wales, and seated at Montgomery Castle, where his descendants principally resided. His great grandson, the subject of this chapter, was son of Richard Herbert and Magdalen Newport, of High Arkall, in Shropshire; and was born in 1581 at Eyton in the same county.

During his early years he was sickly and infirm, and was not taught to read until he was seven. But this tardiness was amply repaid by the extraordinary progress which he made in his studies; for when he was no more than twelve, he attained so great a knowledge of learned languages and logic, that he was sent to the university college in Oxford. Here he gained great applause by disputing in logic, and composing his task oftener in Greek than in Latin.

The death of his father, in the same year, occasioned a temporary removal from the university; and soon afterwards he contracted a marriage with the heiress of St. Julian's, which procured him that mansion and estate; she was the daughter of sir William Herbert of St. Julian's, who was lineally descended from the earl of Pembroke, and who is praised by Churchyard in verse superior to his usual style, as a worthy descendant of that illustrious peer:

- “ And thou my knight, that art his heire in blood,
 “ Though lordship, land, and Ragglan's stately towers,
 “ A female heire, and force of fortune's flood
 “ Have thee bereft, yet bearest his fruits and flowers:

“ His

* “ The citie reacht to Creechurch than,

“ And to St. Gillyan's both:

“ Which yet appears to view of man,

“ To try this tale of troth.”

Churchyard's *Worthines of Wales*, p. 22.



LORD HERBERT of CHERBURY.

*Engraved by Silvester Harding from an original Picture
by Larking
in the Collection of the Rev. Mr. Lucy,
Charlcott, Warwickshire.*

“ His armes, his name, his faith and mynd are thyne,

“ By nature, nurture, arte and grace devyne:

“ Ore seas and lands, these move thee payns to take,

“ For God, for fame, for thy sweete soveraines sake *.

Sir William Herbert bequeathed all his possessions to Mary his only child, provided she married one of the surname of Herbert, or otherwise left her only a small portion out of his lands in Anglesey and Caernarvonshire. “ She continued unmarried,” to use lord Herbert’s own expression, “ till she was one-and-twenty; none of the Herberts appearing in all that time who either in age or fortune was fit to match her: about this time I had attained the age of fifteen, and a match being proposed, yet notwithstanding the disparity of years betwixt us, upon the eight and twentieth of February 1598, in the house of Eyton, where the same man, vicar of * * * * * married my father and mother, christened and married me, I espoused her†.”

Not long after this marriage, he returned to Oxford with his wife and mother, and continued his studies with increased assiduity. Besides his improvements in classical literature, and the other branches usually cultivated, he attained the French, Italian, and Spanish languages without any assistance, and also acquired such a knowledge of music as to sing at sight and to play on the lute. “ My intention” he says “ in learning languages, being to make myself a citizen of the world, as far as it were possible, and my learning of musick was for this end, that I might entertain myself at home, and together refresh my mind after my studies, to which I was exceedingly inclined, and that I might not need the company of young men, in whom I observed, in those times, much ill example and debauchery ‡.” He also devoted himself to the study of medicine and anatomy, affecting to discriminate and to cure many diseases which had baffled the skill of the most eminent physicians.

He was extremely assiduous in learning all bodily exercises, except dancing, for which, he says, he could never find leisure, “ as employing my mind always in acquiring some art or science more usefull.” He was remarkable for agility in running, leaping, and wrestling; excelled in fencing, riding in the

manège;

* Worthines of Wales, p. 10.

† Life, p. 25, 26.

‡ Life, p. 27.

manage; learned the art of shooting with the long bow, breaking horses for the wars, and fighting duels on horseback: in this last qualification his expertness afterwards saved his life; being suddenly attacked by sir John Ayres and four armed associates, he defended himself with so much courage, that although thrown from his horse, dragged in the stirrup, and his sword broken, he drove away the assailants, and wounded sir John Ayres, after having wrested his dagger from him, and struck his sword out of his hand*.

At eighteen he quitted Oxford, and resided either with his mother in London, or at Montgomery castle, till he attained the age of twenty-one.

On the death of queen Elisabeth, he advanced to Burley near Stamford, to congratulate king James on his accession, and met with a gracious reception from the new monarch. Being soon afterwards created knight of the Bath, he does not omit informing us, that at his installation the earl of Shrewsbury put on his spur, and that a "principal lady of the court, and in most men's opinion " the handsomest, took off the tassel of silk and gold from his sleeve, answered " that he would prove a good knight, and pledged her honour for his."

In taking the usual oath of the knights, " never to sit in place where injustice " should be done, except to right to the uttermost of their power, and particularly ladies and gentlewomen that shall be wronged in their honour, if " they desired assistance," his imagination, already filled with romantic notions of barbarous chivalry, was fired with additional enthusiasm, and thinking himself bound by the literal tenor of his oath, he engaged in duels on the most frivolous pretences.

In 1608, on account of a disagreement with his wife about the settlement on their children, as well as from a desire of visiting foreign courts, he went abroad. During this excursion he traversed France, Germany, Switzerland and Italy, and performed many acts of extraordinary heroism, " as make us wonder, and wonder " would make us doubt, did not the charm of his ingenuous integrity dispel our " hesitation †."

To enumerate all the instances of romantic intrepidity recorded by himself, would be to transcribe whole pages; I shall therefore recite in his own words only

one

* Life, p. 88—91.

† Life; Advertisement.

one example, which took place at the siege of Juliers. "One day sir Edward Cecill and myself, coming to the approaches that Monsieur de Balagny had made against a bulwark or bastion of that city, Monsieur de Balagny, in the presence of Sir Edward Cecill, and diverse English and French captains then present, said, "Monsieur, on dit, que vous êtes un des plus braves de votre nation, et je suis Balagny, allons voir qui fera le mieux ; they say you are one of the bravest of your nation, and I am Balagny, let us see who will do best." Whereupon leaping suddenly out of the trenches with his sword drawn, I did in the like manner as suddenly follow him ; both of us in the mean while striving who should be foremost, which being perceived by those of the bulwark and cortine opposite to us, three or four hundred shot at least, great and small, were made against us. Our running forwards in emulation of each other was the cause that all the shots fell betwixt us and the trench from which we sallied. When Monsieur Balagny finding such a storm of bullets, said "Par dieu, il fait bien chaud, It is very hot here." I answered briefly thus, "Vous en irez premier, autrement je n'iray jamais ; You shall go first, or else I will never go : " hereupon he ran with all speed towards the trenches, I followed after, leisurely and upright, and yet came within the trenches before they on the bulwark or cortine could charge again ; which passage afterwards being related to the prince of Orange, he said it was a strange bravado of Balagny, and that we went to an unavoidable death *."

Soon after his return to England he became dissatisfied with the inactivity of his life and was meditating to raise a regiment for the service of the Venetians against the Turks ; but was prevented by an accidental meeting with sir George Villiers, afterwards duke of Buckingham. The king having occasion to send an ambassador to France, for the purpose of renewing the alliance between the two kingdoms, sir George Villiers mentioned sir Edward Herbert among eighteen persons, who were deemed fittest for that employment. The king approved him without the smallest hesitation ; and the first knowledge he had of his nomination, was on being saluted ambassador to France, by the lords of the council,

During

* Life, p. 76.

During his embassy he out-punctilioed the punctilious ambassador of Spain, and returned the insolence of the great constable de Luynes, the despotic minister of Louis the thirteenth, "with the spirit of a gentleman, without committing "the dignity of ambassador*."

In 1625 he was advanced by king James to the dignity of a baron of the kingdom of Ireland, by the title of lord Herbert of Castle Island, and in 1631 to an English peerage, by that of lord Herbert of Cherbury in Shropshire. At the commencement of the disputes between Charles the first and the House of Commons, he took an active part on the side of the sovereign. During the meeting of the peers, which the king summoned to York in 1640, his advice proved the vigour of his mind, and his decided aversion to temporising measures. The commissioners to treat of a peace with the Scots, recommending the king to pay £.40,000 a month for the maintenance of the Scottish troops until they were disbanded, lord Herbert strongly reprobated this humiliating proposal, and concluded a spirited and dignified speech, with advising the king to fortify York, and defend himself against the invasion of the Scots. These resolutions were not adopted; the king consented to give £.25,000 a month for the maintenance of the Scottish troops, and hastened to London to summon that parliament, which abolished monarchy, and doomed him to the scaffold. The noble peer displayed no less spirit in the house of lords, and was committed to the black rod for his manly defence of the king, in opposition to some violent resolutions moved by lord Kimbolton, and adopted by the house. Being released from custody, he obtained permission to retire into the country for his health, and instantly joined the king at York †.

Not long afterwards, however, he changed his party, from a conviction of the weakness and division of the king's counsels, rather than from motives of patriotism; for at the period in which he acceded to the popular side, the arbitrary conduct of Charles the first during the early years of his reign, was obliterated by the greater despotism of the parliament, and the cause of monarchy was the cause of all honest and discerning minds.

In

* Royal and Noble Authors, vol. 1, p. 214.

† Parliamentary History, vol. 11, p. 3.

In 1644 we find him receiving satisfaction from the house of commons for the demolition of Montgomery castle. He was at this period far advanced in years, which was probably the cause, that with his military prowess and enterprising spirit, he did not take an active part in the civil wars. He expired on the second of August 1648, in his house in Queen street, London, aged 67, and was buried in the chancel of St. Giles's in the fields. His grave was covered with a flat marble slab, containing a short inscription composed by himself*.

The earl of Shaftesbury used to say, there was in every one, two men, the wise and the foolish, and that each of them must be allowed his turn†. This observation is peculiarly applicable to lord Herbert of Cherbury. In one point of view, we observe him, like the knight of La Mancha, fighting with windmills, redressing the wrongs of distressed damsels, and risking his life to wrest a lady's top-knot from the hands of a rude despoiler; at other times we discern the same man devoted to a life of retirement, and with equal spirit cultivating philosophy, history, and poetry.

He is justly described by the author of the Welsh tribes as "the historical, the philosophical, the right whimsical peer, a man at once and together the negotiator, the scholar, statesman, soldier, the genius and absurdity of his time and nation‡." At one moment he enforces the belief of a deity in terms of the highest veneration, and inculcates the necessity of a future state, and the doctrine of rewards and punishments; at another, he labours to undermine the truth of the only religion which ascertains the existence and attributes of a superintending deity, and substantiates by moral and historical proof the certainty of a future retribution.

Vanity was his prevailing foible; hence he represents himself as a most extraordinary being, even from his infancy, to the last stage of his life. He says, "My
infancy

* "Huic inhumatur corpus Edvardi Herbert equitis Balnei, baronis de Cherbury & Castle Island, auctoris libri, cui titulus est, De Veritate. Reddor ut herbæ, vicesimo die Augusti anno Domini 1648." He had erected an allegoric monument for himself in the church of Montgomery, a description of

which is given by Lloyd. Eng. Worthies, p. 1018. Royal and Noble Authors, vol. 1 p. 218."

† Locke's Memoirs of the Earl of Shaftesbury. Works, vol. 3, p. 474.

‡ P. 92.

infancy was very sickly; it was so long before I began to speak, that many thought I should be ever dumb; the very furthest thing I remember is, that when I understood what was said by others, I did yet forbear to speak, lest I should utter something that were imperfect or impertinent." He attempts to prove his own superior acuteness, merely because he asked a question, which perhaps scarcely any child ever omitted: "when I came to talk, one of the furthest enquiries I made was how I came into this world? I told my nurse, keeper, and others, I found myself here indeed, but from what cause or beginning, or by what means I could not imagine; but for this I was laughed at by the nurse, and some other women that were present, so I was wondered at by others, who said they never heard a child but myself ask that question *."

He exaggerates common incidents into extraordinary events: he informs us, as a miraculous circumstance, that he grew the breadth of two little fingers after he was thirty years old; that he weighed lighter than men who were lower than himself by the head, and in their bodies slenderer; and that he had a constant pulse in the crown of his head.

With respect to another bodily excellence, let the noble author speak for himself: "It is well known to them that wait in my chamber, that the shirts, waistcoats, and other garments I wear next my body are sweet, beyond what either easily can be believed, or hath been observed in any body else; which sweetness also was found to be in my breath, before I used to take tobacco."

In an age of chivalry the fair, like Desdemona, were wooed with stories of

" Battles, Sieges, Fortunes;

and lord Herbert of Cherbury, like Othello, could,

" even from his boyish days,

" Speak of most disastrous chances,

" Of moving accidents by flood and field,

" Of hair-breadth 'scapes, i' the imminent deadly breach.

He could also boast;

" I often did beguile them of their tears,

" When

* Life, p. 16.

“ When I did speak of some distressful stroke

“ That my youth suffer’d.”

With self-complacency he asserts, that his person was much commended by the lords and ladies of the court ; he also relates many instances of the effect of his attractions, and gives intimations of many more, which honour and delicacy prevented him from divulging.

Among other great personages who were struck with his comeliness, queen Elizabeth must not be omitted. He thus relates his first appearance at court, when he was nineteen years of age : “ As it was the manner of these times for all men to kneel down before the great queen Elizabeth who then reigned, I was likewise upon my knees in the presence chamber when she passed by to the chappel at Whitehall. As soon as she saw me she stopped, and swearing her usual oath, demanded, who is this ? Every body there present looked upon me, but no man knew me, till sir James Croft, a pensioner, finding the queen stayed, returned back, and told who I was, and that I had married sir William Herbert of St. Gillian’s daughter; the queen hereupon looked attentively upon me, and swearing again her ordinary oath, said, it is pity he was married so young, and thereupon gave me her hand to kiss twice, both times gently clapping me on the cheek *.”

Elizabeth was at this period 70 years old ; but he afterwards attracted other queens, who were younger and more beautiful. Anne of Austria, consort of Louis the thirteenth, was particularly courteous to him ; and the marked attentions of Anne of Denmark, queen of James the first, attracted the notice of the public, and excited the jealousy of the king.

The greatest and most beautiful ladies of the court, vied who should obtain his picture ; several, he informs us, procured it surreptitiously, and wore it next their heart : a circumstance which more than once exasperated their husbands, and brought him in danger of assassination. Even the queen placed his portrait in her innermost chamber.

As a scholar and an author, lord Herbert obtained great celebrity in his own age, and was justly esteemed a prodigy of learning. But the same enthusiasm, af-

fectionation,

* Life, p. 53.

fection, and eccentricity which were apparent in his other actions, followed him also in the closet, and influenced in most instances his literary pursuits.

His works may be divided into historical and philosophical. His historical works are the life and reign of Henry the eighth, and his own memoirs.

The reign of Henry the eighth, written at the command of James the first, is allowed to be a master-piece of historic biography; and he is said, by an excellent judge *, to have "acquitted himself with like reputation as the lord chancellor Bacon gained by that of Henry the seventh."

Biography is always pleasing when it records the memoirs of celebrated men; but it becomes doubly interesting, when great persons are their own biographers, and develop their characters, education, progress, pursuits and adventures. This pleasure is still farther heightened, when the narrative of extraordinary events is tinged with the garrulity of age, and the vanity of self-applause. We are then able to unfold the motives of action, to discover the prominent foibles, as well as virtues, and trace the leading feature in the character of the person, who is at once the actor and recorder of the incidents which he exhibits to the public eye. Such a biographer is lord Herbert of Cherbury, in the memoirs of his own life, which he wrote for the knowledge and example of his posterity. He has related his own adventures with peculiar *naïveté*, and dwelt on the most trifling, as well as the most important incidents with equal applause and self-admiration.

His philosophical works were written in Latin; they consist of *De Religione Gentilium errorumque apud eos causis*, and his celebrated treatise *De Veritate*. The former, which treats of the religion of the Gentiles, and the causes of their errors, abounds with historical researches, and examines the mistaken opinions of the heathen priests and philosophers in their notions of the deity.

His book *De Veritate* was his favourite work, and that on which he chiefly prided himself; for it is the only one of his performances, which he mentions in his memoirs, and in his epitaph he distinguished himself as the author of this treatise.

Lord

* Nicholson's Historical Libraries, p. 70.

Lord Herbert is said to have been the first author, who formed deism into a system, and endeavoured to assert the sufficiency, universality, and absolute perfection of natural religion, without the necessity of any extraordinary revelation. He attempted to prove that the light of reason, and the innate principles planted in the human mind, are sufficient to discover the great doctrines of morality, to regulate our actions, and conduct us to happiness in a future state.

To refute these positions is unnecessary, as their fallacy and inconsistency have been ably displayed by Locke, Leland, and many other writers of eminence. But the noble author of these rhapsodies proved himself the strongest enthusiast while he combated enthusiasm, and by his own example evinced the absurdity of his own system.

Having finished this treatise "De Veritate," in which revelation is considered as useless, he was desirous to publish it; but as the frame of his whole book differed from all former writings concerning the discovery of truth, he hesitated whether he should suspend the publication. "Being" he says, "thus doubtful in my chamber, one fair day in the summer, my casement being opened towards the south, the sun shining clear and no wind stirring, I took my book *De Veritate* in my hand, and kneeling on my knees devoutly, said these words; "O thou eternal God, author of the light which now shines upon me, and giver of all inward illuminations, I do beseech thee of thy infinite goodness to pardon a greater request than a sinner ought to make; I am not satisfied enough whether I shall publish this book *De Veritate*; if it be for thy glory, I beseech thee give me some sign from heaven, if not I shall suppress it." I had no sooner spoken these words, but a loud though yet gentle noise came from the heavens, (for it was like nothing on earth) which did so comfort and cheer me, that I took my petition as granted, and that I had the sign I demanded, whereupon also I resolved to print my book: this (how strange soever it may seem) I protest before the eternal God is true; neither am I any way superstitiously deceived herein, since I did not only clearly hear the noise, but in the serenest sky I ever saw, being without all cloud, did to my thinking, see the place from whence it came. And now I sent my book to be printed in Paris, at my own cost and charges *."

It

* Life, p. 172.

It is not possible to reprove the folly and blindness of his conduct in this instance, in warmer terms than those which are employed by his noble editor. "There is no stronger characteristic of human nature, than its being open to the grossest contradictions: one of lord Herbert's chief arguments against revealed religion is, the improbability that Heaven should reveal its will to only a portion of the earth, which he terms particular religion. How could a man, who doubted of partial, believe individual revelation? What vanity, to think his book of such importance to the cause of truth, that it could extort a declaration of the divine will, when the interests of half mankind could not *."

The estate of St. Julian's, and the title of baron Herbert of Cherbury, continued in his descendants, until the extinction of the male line by the death of his grandson Henry, who dying without issue, left his estate to his nephew Francis Herbert, son of his sister Florentia, by Richard Herbert of Oakley park, descended from Matthew Herbert of Dolgiog, uncle to the first lord Herbert of Cherbury †. The estate was inherited by his son, Henry Arthur Herbert, created baron Herbert of Cherbury in 1743. Having espoused Barbara, niece and heiress to William Herbert the last marquis of Powis, he was in 1748 raised to the earldom of Powis; and the blood of the Herberts in all its branches, unites in their son the present earl.

The estate of St. Julian's was purchased from the late earl by Mr. Van of Lanwern; it came, with his other estates, to his daughter Katherine, wife of sir Robert Salisbury, and has been recently sold to Mr. Hunter.

* Walpole's Royal and Noble Authors, vol. i. p. 216. Leland's View of Deistical Writers; and Wood's Athenæ Oxonienses.
 For the contents of this chapter have been consulted the Memoirs of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, written by himself, and edited by the late earl of Orford; † By his will, dated 1690. From sir Robert Salisbury.
 Royal and Noble Authors; Biographia Britannica;

CHAPTER 13.

Lantarnam House.—Branch of the Morgan Family.—Upper Road to Ufk.—Langibby House and Castle.—Family of Williams.—Lower Road to Ufk.—Kemeys House. Inscription in Tredonnoe Church.—Lantrifaint.—Lanllowel.—Vale of Ufk.

FROM Caerleon I made an excursion to Lantarnam house, once the seat of a considerable branch of the Morgan family, which is situated near the high road from Newport to Pont y pool, about two miles from Caerleon. The site of the house was a rich cistercian abbey* of six monks, whose yearly income was rated on the dissolution at £.71. 3s. 2d. According to Tanner, the site was granted, 31 Henry 8. to John Parker, and in 1 Mary to John Carpenter and William Savage. In the reign of Elizabeth, the abbey became the property of the Morgans who resided at Kilfant†, now called Pentre bach, two miles from Lantarnam.

In the pedigree of the Morgans, given by Enderbie, William Morgan, son of John Morgan of Caerleon, and grandson of sir Thomas Morgan of Pencoed, is distinguished as the first proprietor of Lantarnam. The present mansion appears to have been finished in the time of queen Elizabeth, from the old materials of the abbey. The only remains of the ancient structure are the stone cells, converted into stables, the walls of the garden, and a beautiful gothic gateway, which

is

* It is thus mentioned by Leland, "Llantarnam abbey of white monks, standing in a wood, iii miles from Cairleon," vol. 5. fol. 12.

† Cilfant, or as it is pronounced Kilfant, signifies in Welsh, as Mr. Evans informs me, the recess of the little brook Sant, which runs near the house. The mansion, now a farm house, is seated at the extremity of the parish of Lantarnam. Some remaining

parts of the old structure seem to have been erected as early as the time of Henry the second; it is called Pentre bach, or the little village.

On a free stone of the great chimney in the hall, is part of a sepulchral inscription, erected to the memory of Vindutius, a Roman soldier of the second Augustan Legion, aged 45.

is still called *Magna Porta*, and was the grand entrance. Within this gateway is a porch which bears the date of 1588, distinguished with a shield of the Morgan arms in stone, with nine quarterings.

The house is a large antiquated mansion, damp, dreary, and having been long untenanted, exhibits an appearance of gloom and decay, rendered still more melancholy by a few traces of former magnificence. The large hall contains several whole length portraits of our kings and queens, particularly of Henry the eighth, of James the first, of his queen, Anne of Denmark, and of Charles the first when prince of Wales; the royal arms are also blazoned in the windows. Many family portraits are dispersed about the rooms, but no one could inform me whom they represented.

The gardens occupy a flat, and being surrounded with high and massive walls, are lonely and secluded. The park is extensive and diversified, swelling into gentle undulations of rich pasture, and interspersed with thick plantations and dark avenues, which make a conspicuous figure in the adjoining landscape.

The vale in which the house is situated, is watered by the rapid torrent that descends from the hills of *Pont y pool*. It is usually called the *Avon Lwyd**, or *Grey river*, but its original appellation is *Torfaen*, or the breaker of stones; a name which it well deserves from its extreme impetuosity, and stony bed; an opinion likewise prevails among the natives, that the collision of the stones produces sparks of fire.

The church, seated not far from the banks of this torrent, is called from its position, *Lan Torfaen*, which is corrupted into *Lantarnam*. A chapel on the north side of the church, is the cemetery of this branch of the Morgans; the bodies are interred in a vault, without any inscriptions to their memory.

The family of *Lantarnam* was very considerable in wealth and consequence, and before the division of the property, on the failure of the male line, the rent roll was not less than £.8000 a year. In 1642 sir Edward Morgan was created a baronet, and the last male of this line was his grandson, sir Edward Morgan, who died in 1681, at the age of twenty-five. He bequeathed his estate jointly
between

* It received the appellation of *Avon Lwyd*, or the grey river, since the establishment of the iron works at *Pont y Pool*, from its waters being discoloured by scourings of the iron-stone.

between his two daughters. Anne, the youngest, dying unmarried, left her moiety to John Howe, esq. who had espoused her mother, lady Morgan, and it was sold by his son, the first lord Chedworth. Frances, the eldest daughter, married Edmund Bray, esq. of Barrington in Gloucestershire. The mansion-house and estate of Lantarnam passed to her daughters, and now belongs to her descendants Edmund Blewit, esq. of Saltford, and Charles Fettiplace, esq. of Swinebrook, in Oxfordshire.

The nature of the succession has principally occasioned the decay of the mansion; it was left jointly among the daughters of Mrs. Bray, and as neither would agree to relinquish the residence of her ancestors, they occupied the house alternately. Since their death the uncomfortable terms of a joint possession disgusted their descendants, who were settled in a distant county, and the house has remained untenanted for a considerable number of years.

Returning to Caerleon, I pursued my journey to Usk, along the upper road, which crosses the Avon Lwyd, over Pont Saturn, leaving Penros house and encampment at a little distance on the left. I gently ascended for the space of three miles, to the top of an eminence, which overlooks on one side the rich groves of Lantarnam park, and on the other the beautiful vale watered by the Usk, and bounded by the wooded acclivities of Kemeys and Bertholly. The distant country is broken into fine inequalities of hill and dale, till the view is closed by the dusky mass of mountains which overhang Abergavenny. In the full enjoyment of this delightful scenery, I descended to Langibby, which takes its name from the church, dedicated to St. Cibby, or Kebbius. According to the Lives of the Saints, he was a native of Cornwall, ordained bishop by St. Hilary of Poitiers, and preached in Cornwall in the fourth century.

To the west of the village, on a gentle slope, and under the ruins of an old castle, is situated Langibby house, belonging to the ancient family of Williams. It is said to have been built by Inigo Jones, but has nothing striking in the architecture; the apartments however are convenient and well proportioned. The view from the house is peculiarly striking; the Usk sweeps along a rich and narrow vale, and the singular curvature of its stream, which I so much admired from
Bertholly,

Bertholly, here presents itself with still greater effect. From its banks rise the bold heights of the long ridge which joins the Pencamawr, clothed from the bottom to the top with a majestic mantle of impervious wood, and enriched with the hanging groves of Bertholly place.

From the house I ascended to the brow of the hill, on which stand the ruins of Langibby castle, surrounded by an extensive tract of wood. The remains consist only of a square tower, much dilapidated, the walls of some apartments with springing columns, and part of the roof which they supported. The outer walls, which may still be traced, enclosed a large area, of an oblong but irregular shape, which is shewn by the annexed plan; it is now an orchard, and produces excellent cyder. I am totally unacquainted with the æra of its construction, but the remains of several pointed arches prove that it was erected after the introduction of gothic architecture, and probably by the Norman chieftains who conquered this part of Gwent. The finest view of the ruins is to the north, from a paddock at the foot of the hill, where they appear stretching along the brow of the eminence, overhanging the precipice, and embosomed in the wood.

This castle, anciently called Treregreg* or Traygruck, was in the possession of the earls of Gloucester of the line of Clare, and is mentioned among the lands forming the dowry of Maud, widow of Gilbert, the last male of this line. Through his daughter it came to the earls of March of the Mortimer line; among whom Roger Mortimer styles himself lord of Tregrucke, in the charter which he granted to the town of Usk. In the beginning of the seventeenth century, we find it in the possession of the Williams family; it seems to have been a place of importance during the civil wars, and is mentioned by Oliver Cromwell as a house well stored with arms, and very strong.

Enderbie, in a pedigree which he has given of the Williams family, fancifully derives it from Cradoc vreych vras, who is styled a prince between the Severn and Wye, a contemporary with Arthur, and a knight of the round table. The family,

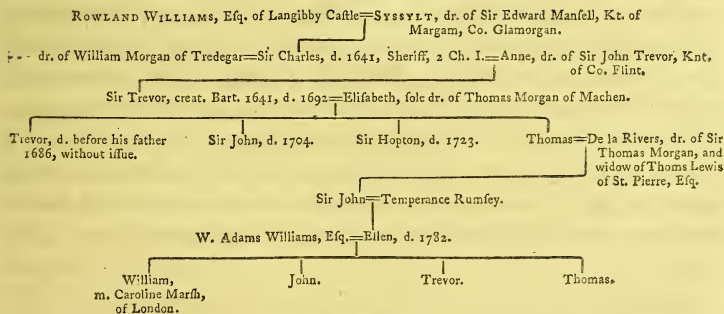
* "The castle of Treregreg a ii. myles from Cair Usk Kibby." Leland, Itin. vol. 5. fol. 7. Dugdale's Baronage, art. Clare and Mortimer. See the next chapter on Usk.

family, however, derive a more unequivocal splendour from sir Trevor Williams, who was created a baronet in 1641. He was one of those who, in the beginning of the civil wars, disgusted with the conduct of Charles the first, adhered to the side of parliament, and distinguished himself for his zeal and activity at the siege of Raglan castle; but perceiving, from fatal experience, that the evils of a revolutionary government were greater than those of the most despotic monarchy, he embraced the royal cause with no less fervour. He excited the apprehensions of Cromwell, who issued orders for his arrest, and described him as a dangerous man, in terms of suspicion and malignity, which prove his prudence and intrepidity, and the veneration entertained for his character*.

He was active in the restoration of monarchy, and lived, beloved and respected, to a very advanced age. Sir John Williams, his grandson, dying in 1738 without

* "Hee is a man (as I am informed) full of craft " for him, whose are apt to rescue him, if apprehended,
 " and subtiltye, very bould and resolute, hath a house, " much more to discover any thinge which may pre-
 " Langebie, well stored with armes, and very stronge, " vent itt." Harris's Life of Oliver Cromwell.
 " his neighbours about him very malignant, and much

PEDIGREE OF THE WILLIAMS FAMILY.



This Pedigree is drawn from Communications by W. A. Williams, esq. and from Le Neve's MS. Pedigrees of Barons, vol. 2. p. 179. 1621—1660, in the possession of Mr. Nichols, printer.

out issue male, his daughter Ellen conveyed the estate of Langibby to her husband William Adams, esq. of Monmouth, who assumed the name and arms of Williams; she died in 1782, and Mr. Williams resigned Langibby place to his son and heir William, the present proprietor. The estate of Langibby is not inconsiderable, but was much larger, till sir John Williams, in virtue of an act of parliament passed in the fifth of William and Mary, sold the lordship of Caerwent, and other lands in Monmouthshire, and the manors of Ewyas Lacy, Walterston, and Trescaillon in the county of Hereford*.

About a mile from Langibby, I was pleased with an agreeable prospect of the bridge, church, and castle of Usk; I then descended to the church of Lanbaddoc, passed along a road which occupies the whole space between the river and a wooded precipice, and crossed over a stone bridge to the town of Usk.

This is the common road between Caerleon and Usk for carriages; but a more level, though more circuitous and rugged route, leads on the left bank of the river. I rode along this track in company with Mr. Evans, and examined it with peculiar attention, as it is supposed by many persons to be nearly the site of the Roman road, from their capital at Caerleon, to the station of Burrium or Usk. Crossing the bridge of Caerleon, we went through the village or Ultra Pontem, to the turnpike gate leading to Newport, turned at right angles into the Usk road, and at a little distance, passed a hollow way, called the old Chepstow hill road, which was formerly the common passage to Caerwent, and supposed to run in the direction of the Julia Strata. We continued along a natural terrace, above the rich marshy plain watered by the Usk, and at the foot of Kemeys cliff, under the chain of encampments which occupy the summit of the ridge,

In our route, Mr. Evans pointed out to me two farm houses, which are called Great and Little Bullmoor. He observed, that according to tradition, Little Bullmoor is built on the foundation of an ancient Roman structure. He likewise informed me, in confirmation of this report, that here was discovered, in 1777 or 1778, the massive foundation of an immense building, consisting of hewn stones, each weighing from half a ton to a ton. Among these fragments,

* From W. Adams Williams, esq.

was a large freestone, six or seven feet in height, and four wide, in which an arched recess was excavated, containing the figure of a man in a sitting posture; the left hand resting on a globe, the right mutilated: it seemed to resemble the statue of an imperator.

The road passes through the small village of Kemeys, between the church, which is a low and rude building in the midst of a field, and the mansion, situated at the bottom of the hanging woods, and under the summer-house called the Folly.

The mansion is an ancient seat, which belonged to a branch of the Kemeys family*. The last proprietor of that line was George Kemeys, who sold it to Laurence Lord, esq. of Banbury in Oxfordshire. Allen Lord, his descendant, died in 1771; his widow is 84, and at her death the estate will be divided between the heirs of his two daughters, who are both deceased.

A fine gothic portal leads into the court yard, and over a doorway of the house is a small figure of a man carved in stone, holding in his right hand an hour-glass, and in his left a scroll, with the Kemeys arms, a chevron charged with three pheons, and G. K. the initial letters of George Kemeys, anno 1693. Underneath is a Welsh motto †, alluding to the hour-glass, which Mr. Evans explained: "Time passes like the breathing gale."

The summer-house on the brow of the eminence, commanding that delightful and extensive view, which I mentioned in the fifth chapter, was erected by George Kemeys. Boasting one day to his uncle, that he had constructed a building from which eleven counties could be seen, the uncle replied, "I am sorry, nephew, that eleven counties can see *thy folly*." Hence it was called Kemeys Folly, and perhaps has given a general appellation to buildings of this kind, which are placed on a commanding eminence.

From Kemeys we continued under the groves of Bertholly, and the forests which clothe the steep sides of the adjoining eminences, till we left the road, and crossed

* The parish register, from which Mr. Evans kindly favoured me with several extracts, records the baptisms of the Kemeys family, as far back as the year 1583. The first person mentioned is:

"Baptizatus fuit Georgius filius Edwardi Kemeys, 17 die februarii anno domini 1583."

† "Onys chwyth awel fe derfyn anser."

crossed the *Usk*, over a handsome stone bridge, built by the architect of the *Pont y Prydd*. The tide flows to this place, and the banks of the *Usk* were strewed with large quantities of timber and underwood, which are brought from the neighbouring forests, and conveyed in barges to *Caeleon* and *Newport*. From the bridge we ascended to *Tredonnoc* church, for the purpose of inspecting a Roman inscription, which is affixed to the inside of the north wall. An accurate fac simile is given by *Horsley*, who relates that it was discovered three feet under ground, near the foundations of the church; it is a sepulchral inscription, erected to the memory of *Julius Julianus*, a soldier of the second *Augustan* legion *. Having satisfied our curiosity, we re-crossed the bridge, and returning to the road, pursued our journey to *Usk*.

Passing through *Lantrifaint*, we admired the church, which is a large handsome gothic building, with a square tower of hewn stone, and turning to the north-east, soon entered the turnpike from *Usk* to the new passage. The road winding round a hill, brought us to *Lanllowel*, a small village, distinguished in the history of *Monmouthshire*, as giving title to *Blethyn Broad Spear*, who is called in the ancient genealogies lord of *Beachley* and *Lanllowel*. He bore for his arms, a chevron between three spears heads, and his daughter and heiress *Alice* married *Peter Fitzreginald*, descended from *Henry Fitzherbert*, and ancestor of the earls of *Pembroke* of the *Herbert* line. The title of lords of *Lanllowel* was retained by his posterity, till it was lost in greater and more splendid dignities.

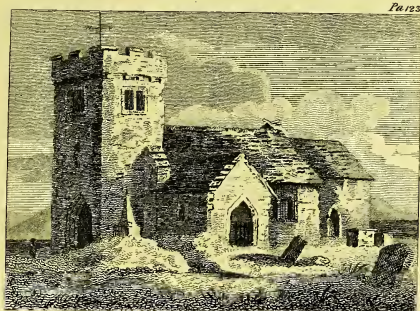
The church, which stands close to the high road, is a very ancient building, of a simple form, without any distinction between the chancel and nave, and with a small belfry, like the church of *Malpas*.

Just beyond the village the road crosses the brook *Olwy*, and continues not far from the left bank of the *Usk*; in some places it hangs over the stream, and in others has been washed away by the violence of the torrent. On the opposite bank of the *Usk*, the country rises in regular gradations, to the summit of the elevated

* "DHS MANIBUS JULIUS JULIANUS MILES EST CURA AGENTE AMANDA CONJUGEL." *Horsley*, *Legionis secundæ Augustæ stipendiorum* p. 192. plate 69.
OCTODECIM ARMORUM QUADRAGINTA HIC SITUS

elevated ridge on which the upper road is carried; the woods and ruins of Langibby castle crowning the eminence. From the bank along which we rode, stretched a rich and extensive plain, bounded by distant hills, and before us the church and town of Usk terminated the view: this plain, called the vale of the Usk *, is the largest tract of level ground in the inland parts of the county; it extends to the west of the town, as far as Landenny, along the lands watered by the Olwy; and to the south between the Usk and the elevated ground beyond Lantrefaint, almost to New Bridge; a rich and fertile district, but exposed to the inundations of the Usk and Olwy.

* It is necessary to distinguish the vale of Usk from Abergavenny, along both sides of the river, as far as the vale of the Usk, which stretches from beyond Lanvair church, at the bottom of the Clytha hills.



TREDONNOC CHURCH

CHAPTER 14.

Town of Usk.—Ancient Burrium.—Castle.—History and Proprietors.—Church.—Inscription.—Priory.—Encampments of Craeg y Gaercyd, Campwood, and Coed y Bunedd.

THE town of Usk is pleasantly situated on the left bank of the river, where the well-wooded undulations of a hilly district terminate in the fertile vale of Usk; and where the abrupt transition from the level and cultivated plain, to the wildness of forest scenery, is peculiarly striking.

A stone bridge of five arches is built across the Usk, from which the mountains in the neighbourhood of Abergavenny present themselves with considerable effect; the even ridge of the Bloreng, and the conical shape of the Sugarloaf, are finely contrasted with the broken summit of the Skyrrid, appearing through an opening of the circumjacent hills.

Although no Roman antiquities have ever been discovered, either in this town or its vicinity, yet Usk is generally and justly allowed to have been the ancient Burrium, an opinion confirmed by its central position between Caerleon, Abergavenny, and Monmouth, and by the exact coincidence of its distance from those places, with the distance in the Itineraries of Burrium, from Isca Silurum, Gobannium, and Blestium. Many authors, however, not satisfied with this argument, endeavour to draw other proofs from its square form*, from its situation at the confluence of two rivers, a supposed resemblance between the Roman name of Burrium †, and the British appellation Bryn Byga, and from certain

* It may be seen from the plan, that the town is by no means of a square form.

† Some persons suppose the name of Burrium derived from the small rivulet Byrddin, which falls into the Usk, a mile above the town, on the opposite side of the river, merely because the three first letters of each word have a similar sound. Mr. Owen, however, has favoured me with a more natural derivation;

Bŵr, pronounced Boor, signifies an enclosure, an entrenchment, or work thrown up for defence. It is generally used in the British tongue, for a simple castum, or strong hold, fortified with heaps of timber, stones, and other materials, as were the ancient British fortresses. See Owen's Welsh and English Dictionary, art. Bŵr.



certain rectilinear swellings or banks, although none of these circumstances are sufficiently decisive to prove it a Roman station.

It was most probably a British town, and derived its Roman name from Bwr, which signifies an entrenchment, or enclosure fortified with trees and stones, in the manner of the ancient Britons. Being taken by the Romans, it was perhaps never used as a primary station, but simply curbed by a garrison, who occupied a small fort, situated on the very eminence where the ruins of the present castle are placed.

Usk is undoubtedly a place of great antiquity, and was of considerable extent. In digging wells, and making foundations for buildings, three ranges of pavement have been discovered, and in the adjacent fields pitched roads traced *, which are supposed to have been streets of the town. According to the tradition of the natives, several places, at some distance from the present houses, were once comprised within the precincts; and a lane, called Book † lane, was pointed out to me as having been a street of the town. Many ancient houses are in ruins, and a considerable district is much dilapidated, exhibiting the appearance of having been sacked, and recently quitted by an enemy: several of these houses are faced with hewn stone, and from the form of the windows, seem to have been constructed at an early period; the natives consider these ruins as the effect of Owen Glendower's devastations; the western part is more modern, and in better repair, and the place, of which the new market-house occupies the center, has a neat appearance.

Usk contains one hundred and sixty-six houses, and not more than seven hundred inhabitants. It has no commerce, and only one manufactory of japan ware, which was established by Mr. Edward Allgood of Pont y Pool, and is now carried on by his nephew Mr. Hughes. The river is famous for its salmon; and there are several weirs in the vicinity; one of these is rented by Mr. Rhees, post-

* In a field called Cae-puta, to the south of the town, between the church and the turnpike road, about five years ago, a paved road was discovered under ground; it was nine feet broad, and formed of hewn stones placed edgewise.

† A ridiculous tradition is current among the natives, that this name is derived from the bookbinders, who once inhabited the street.

poft-master, and brings a confiderable profit; in his houfe is the figure of a falmon, caught in 1782, which weighed 68 pounds and a half.

To the fouth of the town are elevated embankments of earth, fretching in a ftrait line to the Ufk, oppofite Lanbaddoc, where there was formerly a ford. Thefe I once fupposed to have been remains of ancient ramparts; Mr. Morrice, however, from whose furvey a plan of the town is given, more juftly confiders them as not intended for defence, but as raifed for the purpofe of preferving the town from the inundations of the Olwy, which often lays the adjacent country under water.

Ufk is a borough town, and in conjunction with Newport and Monmouth, fends one member to parliament.

The original charter for electing the mayor, regulating the adminiftration of juftice, and conferring certain privileges to the bailiff or mayor, community, and burgeffes, was granted by Elifabeth de Burgh, to whom the lordfhip belonged, and was confirmed by her fon Roger de Mortimer, earl of March, by a deed dated at his caftle of Ufk, in 1398, in which he ftiles himfelf earl of March and Ulfter, lord of Ufk, Trelegg, Tregrucke, Carlyon, Edlogan, and Labeneth, in Wales. This charter being deftroyed, during the conflagration of the town by Owen Glendower, was confirmed by his fon Edmund, in the third year of Henry the fifth*.

The difcovery of this charter proved highly beneficial to the inhabitants, who had, by a ftatute of queen Elifabeth, contributed to the repairs of Newport and Caerleon bridges; but in 1792, at the fuggestion of Mr. Prothero, an eminent attorney of the place, the corporation obtained an exemption, in virtue of a claufe in the fame ftatute, enacting “ that no *town corporate* fhall be contributory, which is bound to make or repair any bridge over any main river.”

An agreeable walk leads under the firft arch of the bridge, to the Abergavenny road, through a meadow planted with large walnut trees, by the fide of the limpid and murmuring Ufk, under the ruins of the caftle and its high ponderous ivy-mantled tower, which are feen on this fide to the beft advantage.

The

* A copy of this charter is in the poffeffion of the Rev. Mr. Jones of Piffill.



W. Byrne del.

By Rich. Mason, sculp. del.

BRIDGE AND CASTLE OF USK.

The ruins of the castle, which are neither magnificent, nor highly interesting in their appearance, stand on an abrupt eminence, to the east of the river, and follow the circular bend of the hill; they consist of the shell, which encloses an area or court, and some outworks to the west, formed by two strait walls converging to each other, and strengthened at the point of union by a round tower. At the extremity of the southern wall is a grand gothic gateway, with a groove for a portcullis, which was the principal entrance, and of which an accurate engraving is given in Grose's *Antiquities*; the upper part is converted into a farm house, with considerable additions. This shell occupies a large extent. Like all ancient castles built in early periods, it consists of strait walls, strengthened with round and square towers, and provided on the outside with no apertures, but long embrasures, or oeillets, excepting those which have since been formed. Within are several apartments, with chimneys, and a baronial hall, measuring 48 feet by 24. A vignette of the keep, or square tower, is annexed.

No castle in Monmouthshire has been subject to more frequent assaults; it suffered, as well as the town, from the ravages of Owen Glendower, who, after committing the most merciless depredations, was defeated at the battle of Usk, by the royal troops, and driven back in disgrace to his native mountains.

A singular bird's eye view of Usk is seen from the terrace, on the outside of the castle, under the ivy-mantled tower, which overhangs the brow of the precipice. The town occupies a level, and not a single building seems to stand on the smallest rise; the houses are partly intermixed with fields of pasture; the white church of Lanbaddoc, which stands on the opposite bank, seems included within the precincts of the town; and the Usk, issuing from hills and forests, and glistening as it passes the bridge, enhances the beauty of the circumjacent scenery.

The founder of this castle is uncertain; the earliest account of it which has fallen under my observation, mentions that it belonged to Richard de Clare, earl of Gloucester and Hereford, who flourished in the reign of Henry the third, and on whose death, in 1262*, Maud, his widow, had an assignation of the castle and

manor

* He was buried in the church of Tewksbury, and an epitaph placed over his tomb, which ascribes to him the modesty of Hippolitus, the beauty of Paris, the wisdom of Ulysses, the piety of Æneas, and the wrath of Hector:

"Hic pudor Hippoliti, Paridis genæ, sensus Ulixis,
"Æneæ pietas, Hectoris ira jacet."

Dugdale's *Baronage*, vol. 1. p. 213.

manor of *Ufk*, as part of her dower. We have therefore reason to conclude, that it came to him by inheritance, from his ancestors the earls of *Clare*, who subdued *Nether-went*. The first invaders of these parts were *Walter* and *Gilbert de Clare*, who flourished in the reign of *Henry the first*; and the conquest was completed by their immediate successors *. The general character of the building seems to corroborate the opinion, that it was built in the Norman æra.

On the death of *Gilbert de Clare*, last earl of *Glocester*, of that line, in 1314, his sister *Elisabeth* conveyed the castle of *Ufk*, together with his other vast possessions, to her husband *John de Burgh*, son of *Richard* earl of *Ulster*. Their son *William* left an only daughter, *Elisabeth*, who espoused *Lionel* duke of *Clarence*, third son of *Edward the third*, and united by this marriage the vast inheritance of the families of *De Burgh* and *Clare*.

His only daughter *Philippa* married *Edmund Mortimer* earl of *March*, great grandson of *Roger de Mortimer*, the minion of queen *Isabella*, who, in 1330, was executed and attainted for the murder of *Edward the second*. In 1369 *Edmund* had livery of all his castles and lands. He was a puissant peer, bearing the titles of earl of *March* and *Ulster*, lord of *Wigmore*, *Clare* and *Connaught*, and marshal of *England*. In 1379 he was constituted lord lieutenant of *Ireland*; and as *Dugdale* says, “ accordingly went thither, there to make his abode; and so tamed the barbarousness of that rude people, by destroying ten or eleven of their petty kings within the space of half a year, that he regained almost all his lands in *Ulster*, which the *Irish* had for a long time enjoyed: and proceeding farther into that country, what with his prudent conduct, affability to the natives, kindness, and eloquent expressions, that within two years and a half he reduced all those parts to obedience: causing divers oaks of an extraordinary length to be sent into *Ireland*, from his woods of *Pennalt*, in the territory of *Ufke* in *Wales*, wherewith he formed a strong bridge, with purpose to fet over the river *Banne*, near to the town of *Kolleroth*, which was a principal harbour for the rebels, at both ends whereof he raised a fort, (besides one in the midst) to the end it might be a safeguard to himself and his own soldiers, and an effectual destruction to the enemy †.

Edmund

* See the Pedigree of the *Clare* family, in the chapter on *Chepstow*.

† *Dugdale*, vol. 1. p. 149.

Edmund was prematurely overtaken by death in the midst of his great exploits; in 1381 he deceased at Cork, in the 29th year of his age. His body was, by his own express desire, deposited in the cathedral of Cork, until the flesh was consumed; his bones were translated to Wigmore, and honourably entombed with the lady Philippa his wife, and two rhyming epitaphs in Latin were inscribed over their ashes*.

Edmund left issue three sons and two daughters. His second son, sir Edmund Mortimer, knight, was taken prisoner by Owen Glendower in 1403, an event which has given rise to much confusion, as he has been mistaken by historians for his nephew. The youngest son, sir John, was imprisoned in the tower, and executed in 1424, under the charge of attempting to escape, and raise an insurrection in Wales†.

Roger, the eldest son and heir, was born at Usk in 1374, and baptised by William, bishop of Hereford, having for his godfathers the bishop of Landaff and the abbot of Gloucester, and the prioress of Usk for his godmother. In the parliament, held 1386, he was declared, in virtue of his descent from Lionel duke of Clarence, heir apparent to the crown. After doing homage, and receiving livery of all his lands, he followed, in 1396, the king into Ireland, with a retinue of two bannerets, eight knights, ninety-eight men at arms, two hundred archers on horseback, and four hundred on foot. In 1399, being lord lieutenant of Ireland, he was slain as he incautiously advanced before his army in an Irish habit.

His eldest son, Edmund, who was only six years old, being rightful heir to the crown, was detained in custody at Windsor, by the jealousy of the new sovereign, Henry the fourth. His uncle, sir Edmund Mortimer, after his capture, having leagued with Owen Glendower and Henry Percy, to dethrone Henry the fourth and raise his nephew to the crown, the young earl was secretly conveyed from prison, but retaken in his journey to Wales, and detained in closer custody than before. From this state he was delivered by the magnanimity of Henry the fifth,

* "Vir constans, gratus, sapiens, bene nuper amatus;

"Nunc nece prostratus, sub marmore putret humatus.

"Hic jacet Edmundus moriens Corke corpore mundus;

"Sisque pius Christe sibi, quem lapis opprimit iste."

"Nobilis hic tumulata jacet comitissa Philippa,
"Actibus hæc nituit larga, benigna fuit.

"Regum sanguis erat, morum probitate vigeat

"Compaciens inopi, vivit in arce cæli."

Dugdale, vol. 1. p. 150.

† Rapin, vol. 4. p. 333.

fifth, who, though well aware of his prior right to the throne, not only released him from confinement, but treated him with great kindness, and even gave him the livery of all his lands, which rendered him the most powerful subject in the kingdom. Influenced by these marks of goodness, the earl of March forgot his superior title, served his sovereign with unshaken fidelity, and repeatedly followed him to the combat at the head of his numerous retainers. He did not long survive his royal friend and benefactor, but died in the third of Henry the sixth, leaving no issue by his wife Anne, the daughter of Edmund earl of Stafford.

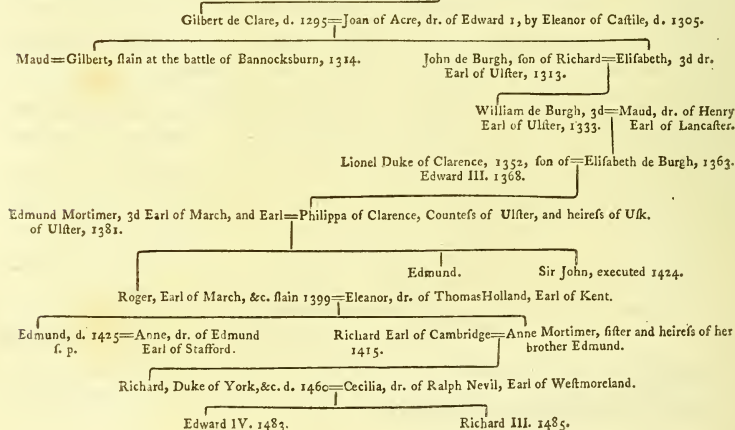
His vast possessions were assigned to his nephew Richard duke of York, son of his sister Anne, by Richard earl of Cambridge. The castle of Usk was a favourite residence of this descendant and father of kings; according to Churchyard*, who is more accurate than poetical, it was distinguished by the births of his two sons, who afterwards became Edward the fourth, and Richard the third †.

On the death of Richard the third, his property, with the castle of Usk, came into the possession of Henry the seventh, in virtue of his marriage with the daughter

* "A castle there, in Uske doth yet remaine,
"A seate where kings and princes have been borne:
"It stands full on a goodly pleasant plaine;
"The walls whereof, and towers are all to torne."
"King Edward the fourth, and his children (as
"some asserme) and King Richard the third, were
"borne here."

Churchyard's Worthines of Wales, p. 19.

† RICHARD DE CLARE, Earl of Gloucester and Lord of Usk, d. 1262 = Maud, dr. of John de Lacy Earl of Lincoln, 2d wife.

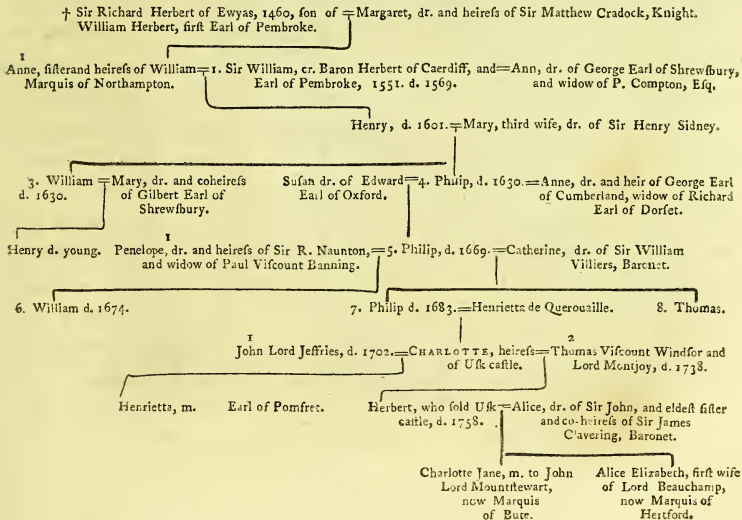


ter of Edward the fourth. It afterwards belonged to William, first earl of Pembroke, of the second branch of the Herbert family Philip, his fourth descendant, dying in 1683 without issue male, his only daughter and heirs conveyed it to Thomas, viscount Windfor.

The estates in Monmouthshire, possessed by this second branch, were scarcely inferior to those of the first earl of Pembroke of the Herbert line. Philip, the last proprietor of Usk castle, could have passed almost the whole way, through his own manors, from the vicinity of Monmouth to Newton Down, beyond Cowbridge in Glamorganshire, a distance of nearly sixty miles. The trustees of his daughter, in their annual circuit, during her minority, were not unfrequently escorted by more than fifteen hundred of her tenants and dependants from Chepstow to the castle at Caerdiff, where the accounts were audited and the rents received. Hence some notion may be formed of the great estates and influence once possessed by the earls of Pembroke in Monmouthshire, although they do not at present retain one solitary manor or estate in the whole county*.

The castle was purchased from their grandson Herbert, viscount Windfor †, with

* From William Jones, esq.



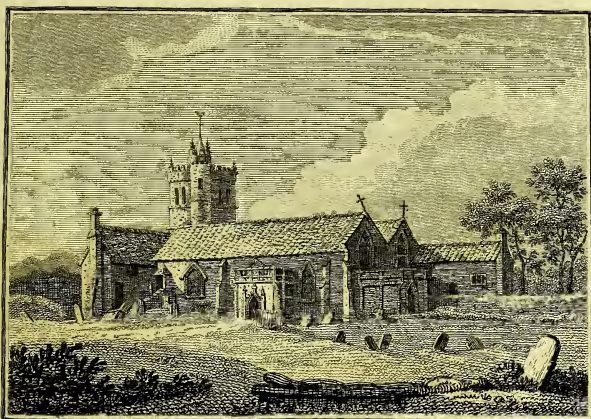
with a large contiguous property, at auction, by Valentine Morris of Piercefield, who, unable to pay the deposit, sold it to lord Clive, of whom it was bought by the present duke of Beaufort.

The church is an ancient edifice, and seems to have been constructed in the Anglo Norman æra; it was originally much larger, and built in the shape of a cathedral. The square embattled tower which now stands at the east end, occupied the center, and communicated with a transept and choir, which no longer exist, but of which traces are visible on the outside. The architecture of this tower bears a Norman character, as is evident from its columns and circular arches.

The remaining parts have been either rebuilt, or undergone great additions, alterations, and repairs. Four pointed arches separate the nave from a north aisle; the windows are ornamented gothic, and the porches, in the same style of architecture, are not inelegant.

In the church is a long and narrow brass plate, formerly chained to the wall, but now nailed on the top of the partition between two pews, near the chancel, bearing an inscription, of which a fac simile has been given by Harris, and copied in the late edition of Camden. From an erroneous explanation, it is supposed to be a mixture of Latin and British, and has been adduced as a proof of the long residence of the Romans* in these parts. It has been interpreted by the learned Dr. Wotton, as an epitaph on a professor of astronomy, and head of a college of two hundred philosophers, whom Geoffrey of Monmouth, and Alexander Elsbienfis, place at Caerleon before the arrival of the Saxons. This illustration was adopted by the Rev. Theophilus Evans, who never saw the inscription, in a Welsh publication called the Mirror, printed in 1740, and has been followed by all succeeding writers on the subject. But the best judges of the Welsh language, are decidedly of opinion, that the inscription is wholly Welsh, and written in the dialect of Gwent used in the middle ages; it is also evident, that there is not the smallest reference to Caerleon, and that the letters which Dr. Wotton mistook for that word, are 'yar lle'yn, and have a very different signification. As the

* Harris, in *Archæologia*, vol. 2. 19. Strange, in *Archæologia*, vol. 6. p. 12.



R.H. del.

USK CHURCH.

Engraved North & West by Girdell & Davies, Strand.

W.H. sculp.



R.H. del.

PORCH OF USK PRIORY.

Engraved North & West by Girdell & Davies, Strand.

W.H. sculp.

the best critics in the Welsh language have differed essentially concerning the meaning of the inscription, I, who am totally unacquainted with the language, cannot presume to give any opinion; but shall refer the reader to the dissertation in the appendix.

This church belonged to the priory, of which the remains still exist on the south-east side of the tower. A circular arched portal leads from the churchyard through the court, to the ancient edifice, which is now a farm house. It was a priory of five benedictine nuns, founded by the earls of Clare, who possessed the castle. We learn from Tanner, that it was established before 1236, and the nuns were accustomed to pray for sir Richard de Clare, and Gilbert his son, earls of the Marches, as their founders. According to Dugdale, they were endowed with £. 55. 4s. 5d. per annum; and on the dissolution, the site was granted to Roger Williams *, of Langibby, grandfather of sir Trevor Williams. It was sold by some of his descendants; belonged to the late alderman Hayley; and forms part of his widow's jointure. An apartment on the first floor is not unworthy of notice, as the frieze is ornamented with thirty devices, and emblazoned coats of arms; several of which probably belonged to the founders and benefactors of the priory, or to the proprietors of the castle.

Part of the common prison, which is situated near the bridge, was formerly an ancient Roman catholic chapel; the gothic doorway, which formed the south-ern entrance, still remains; another gothic doorway to the north is filled up; the principal vaultings of the roof, with the cornice ornamented with dentels are visible.

At Usk I had the good fortune to dine in company with the principal gentlemen of the county, who were assembled for the purpose of procuring a renewal of the turnpike act. They unanimously proffered their services to forward my researches, and in the course of my tour, I experienced from them great marks of hospitality, and received many and interesting communications.

In the vicinity of Usk are three ancient encampments, Craeg y Gaercyd, Campwood, and Coed y Bunedd. Craeg y Gaercyd is mentioned by Harris, as a Roman camp,

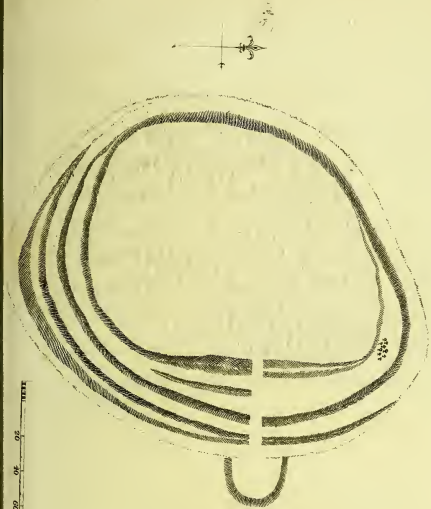
* Tanner. See also Jones's Index to Records of the Exchequer, vol. 1. art. Williams.

camp, merely because some Roman coins are said to have been discovered at Stavernen house, an adjacent mansion, but of which I could not discover any tradition. It is situated two miles from the town, to the east of the Pont y Pool road, on the brow of a precipice overhanging the right bank of the Usk; the site is overgrown with thickets and brambles, and the entrenchments are in many places thirty feet deep; at the north-western side are several tumuli, some of which are from 15 to 20 feet in height. The shape does not in the least indicate a Roman character; it may have been either a British fortress, or an entrenchment thrown up, during some of the repeated assaults, to which the castle of Usk was subject, in feudal times. In visiting this encampment, I passed the small torrent called Berddin, from which some writers have derived the name of Burrium, as being placed at its confluence with the Usk.

The two other camps are on the opposite side of the river, to the east of the high road leading from Usk to Abergavenny. Campwood, two miles from the town, above the wild and sequestered common of Gwhelwg, is of an oval shape, enclosed by a single ditch, and comprehending a circumference of 700 yards; it is wholly overgrown with wood, from which circumstance it derives its appellation.

The encampment of Coedy Bunedd is formed on the summit of a commanding eminence, at the extremity of the Clytha hills, about four miles from Usk, and to the west of the turnpike road leading to Abergavenny; it is a small camp of 480 yards in circumference within the ramparts, but of considerable strength. The western and northern sides being precipitous, are bounded by a single entrenchment; the other sides are fortified with triple ditches and ramparts. The entrance is covered by a tumulus, which rendered the access extremely difficult, and appears to have been fortified at each extremity with towers, of which the foundations still remain. It was originally strengthened with walls, and many of the stones lie scattered on the sides and tops of the ramparts. The form of the area inclosed by the inner entrenchment may be easily traced, as it is without a single tree; it follows the nature of the ground, and nearly resembles the shape of a D; a circumstance very common in the encampments of

Monmouthshire.



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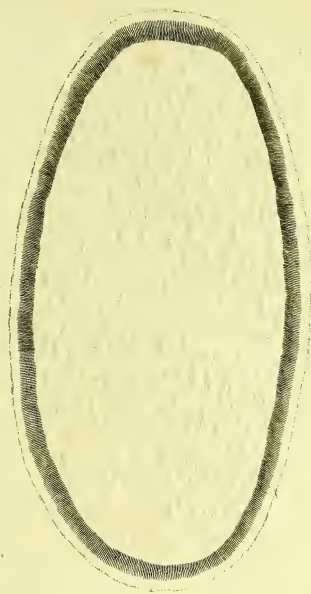
From Lŷh

From Gowellog Common

to Bryngwyn



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Campwood



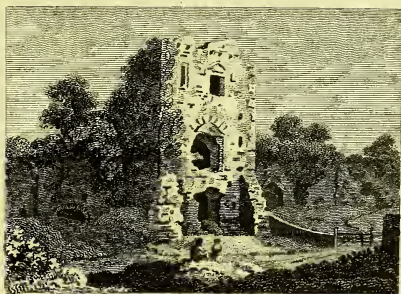
Craig y Garciyd



0 20 40 60 80 Yds

Monmouthshire. Just beyond its northern extremity, nearly on the verge of the eminence, is a tuft of trees, which is a conspicuous and beautiful object from the subjacent country. The western side overhangs the meandering *Ufk*, and commands a beautiful view of the northern parts of the county, which will amply repay the traveller for the trouble of ascending the summit. It is most admirably calculated for an exploratory camp, and was connected by roads on one side with the post of Campwood, and on the other, over a ford of the *Ufk*, near Kemeys commander, with *Craeg y Gaercyd*.

The character is British, but the strait roads, exhibiting vestiges of paved causeways, diverging from it in all directions, favour a conjecture, that it was once occupied by the Romans.



KEEP OF USK CASTLE

CHAPTER 15.

Raglan Castle.—History.—Proprietors.—Anecdotes of William Herbert Earl of Pembroke, of Sir Charles Somerset first Earl, and of Henry first Marquis, of Worcester.—Siege, Surrender, and Demolition of the Castle.—Church.—Cemetery.—Character of Edward Earl of Glamorgan and second Marquis of Worcester.

RAGLAN castle is a principal object in the tour of Monmouthshire ; it is situated nearly in the center of the lowland part of the county, and may be visited with the same ease from Chepstow, Monmouth, Abergavenny and Usk. During my successive journeys, I made several excursions to it from different quarters, but found the route from Chepstow, over the ridge of the Devaudon, more interesting, and abounding with a greater variety of extensive and beautiful views.

The castle stands on a gentle eminence near the village. At some distance, the ruins appeared only a heavy shapeless mass, half hid by the intervening trees ; on a nearer approach, they assumed a more distinct form, and presented an assemblage highly beautiful and grand. These majestic ruins, including the citadel, occupy a tract of ground, not less than one third of a mile in circumference.

The citadel, a detached building to the south of the castle, is at present half demolished, but was a large hexagon defended by bastions, surrounded with a moat, and connected with the castle by means of a drawbridge ; it was called Melyn y Gwent, or the yellow tower of Gwent, and when entire was five stories high. A stone staircase leads to the top of a remaining tower, from whence we looked down on the outworks, and majestic ruins of the castle, and enjoyed a fine prospect of an extensive tract of country, bounded by the distant hills and
mountains

a Kitchen

b b Ordinary Offices

c The Oven

d d d Rooms for Officers of

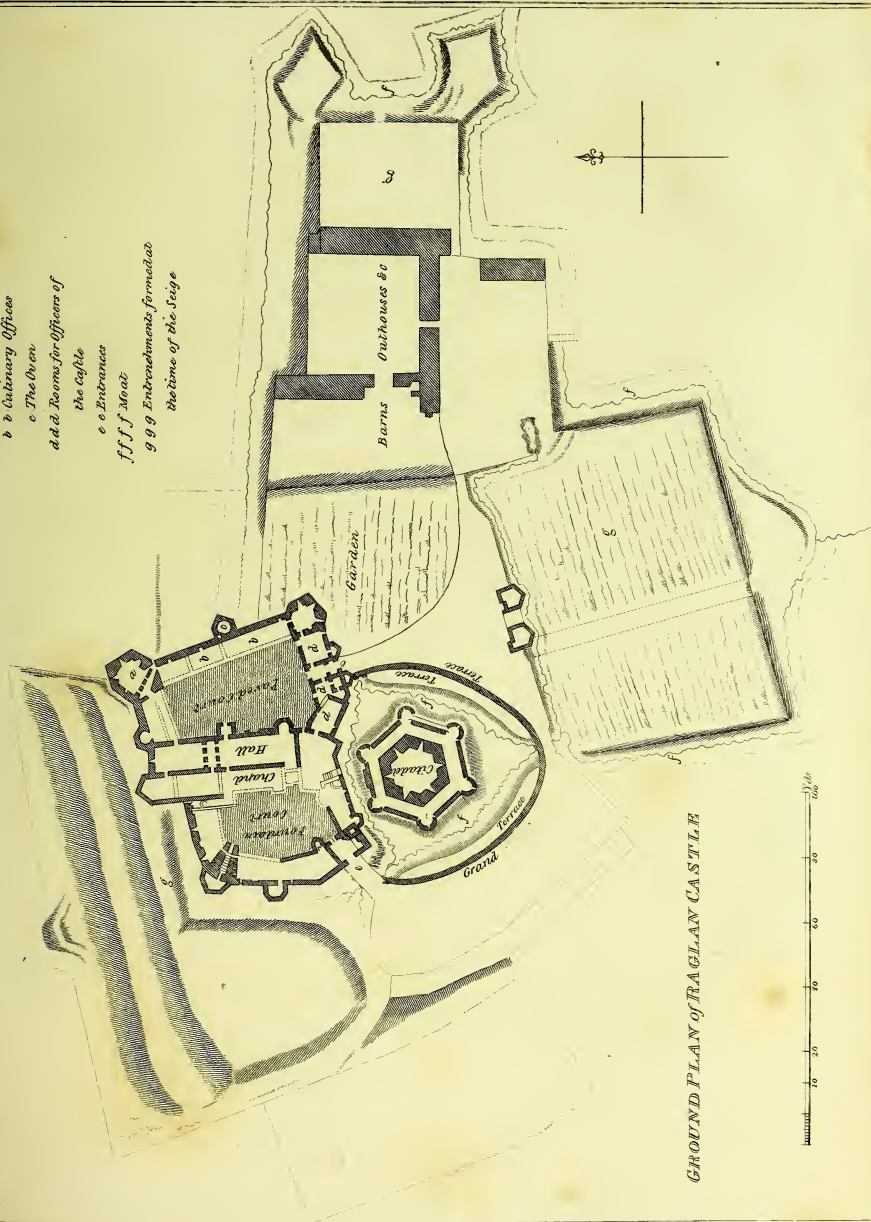
the Castle

e e Entrance

f f f Moat

g g g Entrenchments formed at

the time of the Siege



GROUND PLAN OF RAGLAN CASTLE



mountains in the neighbourhood of Abergavenny. The citadel was furrounded with raised walks; in the walls with which they were bounded, are the vestiges of niches, once ornamented with statues of the Roman emperors.

The shell of the castle incloses two courts or areas, each of which communicated with the terrace, by means of a gateway, and a bridge carried over the moat. The edifice was faced with hewn freestone, which has received little injury from time, and gives a light and elegant appearance to the ruins; it is of a whitish grey colour, beautifully grained, and as smooth as if it had been polished.

Of these noble ruins, the grand entrance is the most magnificent; it is formed by a gothic portal, flanked with two massive towers; the one beautifully tufted with ivy, the second so entirely covered, that not a single stone is visible. At a small distance on the right appears a third tower, lower in height, almost wholly ivyless, and with its machicolated summit, presenting a highly picturesque appearance. The porch, which still contains the grooves for two portcullises, leads into the first court, once paved, but now covered with turf, and sprinkled with shrubs. The eastern and northern sides contained a range of culinary offices, of which the kitchen is remarkable for the size of the fireplace; the southern side seems to have formed a grand suite of apartments, and the great bow window of the hall, at the south-western extremity of the court, is finely canopied with ivy. The stately hall which divides the two courts, and seems to have been built in the days of queen Elisabeth, contains the vestiges of ancient hospitality and splendour; the ceiling is fallen down, but the walls still remain; it is sixty feet in length, twenty-seven in breadth, and was the great banqueting room of the castle. At the extremity are placed the arms of the first marquis of Worcester, sculptured in stone, and surrounded with the garter; underneath is the family motto, which fully marks the character of the noble proprietor, who defended the castle with such spirit against the parliamentary army: "*Mutare vel timere sperno*;" "I scorn either to change or fear." The fireplace deserves to be noticed, for its remarkable size, and the singular structure of the chimney. This hall is occasionally used as a five's court.

To the north of the hall are ranges of offices, which appear to have been

T

butteries;

butteries ; beyond are the traces of splendid apartments. In the walls above, I observed two chimney-pieces, in high preservation, neatly ornamented with a light frieze and cornice : the stone frames of the windows are likewise in many parts, particularly in the south front, distinguished with mouldings and other decorations, which, Mr. Wyndham justly observes, would not be considered as inelegant, even at present.

The western door of the hall led into the chapel, which is now dilapidated ; but its situation is marked by some of the flying columns, rising from grotesque heads, which supported the roof ; at the upper end are two rude whole length figures, in stone, several yards above the ground, recently discovered by Mr. Heath* under the thick clusters of ivy. Beyond the foundations of the chapel is the area of the second court, skirted with a range of buildings, which, at the time of the siege, formed the barracks of the garrison. Not the smallest traces remain of the marble fountain, which once occupied the center of the area, and was ornamented with the statue of a white horse.

Most of the apartments of this splendid abode were of grand dimensions, and the communications easy and convenient. The strength of the walls is still so great, that if the parts yet standing were roofed and floored, it might even now be formed into a magnificent and commodious habitation.

The ground-plan and views, which accompany this chapter, render it unnecessary to enter into a minute description of these extensive ruins ; I shall therefore only observe, that the immense expence and labour of erecting this enormous pile, are no less evident, from the large vaults and subterraneous cells, which are formed under the hall, courts, and surrounding apartments, than from the majestic remains which tower above ground.

From the second court, a bridge thrown across the moat leads to the platform, or terrace, which almost surrounds the citadel, and was much admired by king Charles the first ; the south-western side is still perfect, and forms a noble walk
of

* Heath's Account of Raglan Castle, p. 72. Mr. Heath, bookseller of Monmouth, has collected in this publication some curious documents concerning the castle of Raglan and the Beaufort family, to which I am indebted for several anecdotes recorded in this chapter, from the Apothegms of the marquis of Worcester.



See Note opposite page 101

W. Byrne del.

RAGLAN CASTLE.

of 60 feet in breadth, and 300 in length, commanding a pleasing and extensive view. At one extremity stands an ancient elm, which appears almost coeval with the earliest foundation of the castle; the trunk near the root is 28 feet 5 inches in circumference; there seems to have been a row of these venerable elms, for at a small distance is another very old, but of inferior size.

The outworks, which were formed for the defence of the castle, before the siege, were too extensive for the garrison; their shape and dimensions may be traced by the remains of bastions, hornworks, trenches, and ramparts, which still exist, and are laid down in the plan.

Churchyard, in his quaint versification, describes the sumptuous appearance of the castle in the reign of queen Elizabeth *, and a curious account of its state, not long before the siege, is in the possession of the Rev. Mr. Jones of Pistill: it is partly printed in the History of Monmouthshire, and in Heath's Account of Raglan Castle.

Raglan castle is more modern than all the other castles in Monmouthshire. If any parts of the old castellated mansion, which existed in the time of sir John Morley, or his predecessors, still remain in the present structure, they have been so much altered, and adapted to the subsequent improvements, as not to be easily discriminated. The earliest style perceivable in the building is not anterior to the reign of Henry the fifth, and the more modern, as late as the æra of Charles the first; the fashion of the arches, doors, and windows, and the style of the ornaments, are progressively of the intermediate ages. We may therefore ascribe its construction principally to sir William ap Thomas, and his son the earl of Pembroke; parts were since added by the earls of Worcester, and the citadel and outworks were probably erected by the gallant marquis, who last resided in this sumptuous mansion.

The great extent of the castle, the grandeur and number of the apartments, and the size of the offices and cellars, give proofs of baronial magnificence and splendid

* " Not farre from thence, a famous castle fine,
" That Ragglan hight, stands moted almost round;
" Made of freestone, upright as straight as line,
" Whose workmanship in beautie doth abound,

" The curious knots, wrought all with edged toole,
" The stately tower, that looks ore pond and poole,
" The fountain trim, that runs both day and night,
" Doth yield in shewe, a rare and noble sight."

The Worthines of Wales, p. 6.

splendid hospitality, scarcely conceivable in the present times. The grand establishment of the first marquis of Worcester is recorded in the above mentioned account of Raglan castle; the numerous officers of his household, retainers, attendants, and servants, appear like the retinue of a sovereign rather than a subject. He supported, for a considerable time, a garrison of eight hundred men; and on the surrender of the castle, besides his own family and friends, the officers alone were no less than four colonels, eighty-two captains, sixteen lieutenants, six cornets, four ensigns, and four quartermasters, besides fifty-two esquires and gentlemen.

The demesnes of the castle corresponded with the magnitude of the establishment; besides the gardens and pleasure-grounds adjoining to the mansion, the farms were numerous and well conditioned; the meadows around Landenny were appropriated for the dairy; an extensive tract of land, clothed with oak and beech, formed the home park, and the red deer park stretched beyond Landeilo Creffeney.

In the thirteenth century, the great family of Clare seem to have possessed a castle at Raglan. According to Dugdale, Richard Strongbow, the last male of this puissant line, gave, in the reign of Henry the second, the castle and manor of Raglan, in the county of Monmouth, to Walter Bloet, whose descendant Elisabeth, sole daughter and heir of sir John Bloet, brought it to sir James Berkley; to this sir James Berkeley and to his wife, Henry the fourth, in 1399, confirmed the town and castle of Raglan*; and on his death, in 1405, they came by intail to his son James lord Berkley, who died in 1463.

Such is the account given by Dugdale in one part of his baronage, from documents preserved in the castle of Berkley. In another passage of the same work, he asserts, on the authority of papers, in the possession of lord Herbert of Cherbury, that sir John Morley, knight, who lived in the reign of Richard the second, resided in this castle, and that his daughter and heirs conveyed it, by marriage, into the family of Herbert †.

Without

* Art. Berkley. "To this sir James and Elisabeth, " king Henry the fourth, in the first year of his reign, " confirmed the town and castle of Raglan in Com. " Monmouth, which earl Richard, son to earl Gilbert, " had given to Walter Blewit, his ancestor, and his " heirs. Temp. H. 2." Dugdale's Baronage, vol. 1. p. 361. See also Collins's Peerage, art. Berkley.

† Art. Lord Herbert of Cherbury.



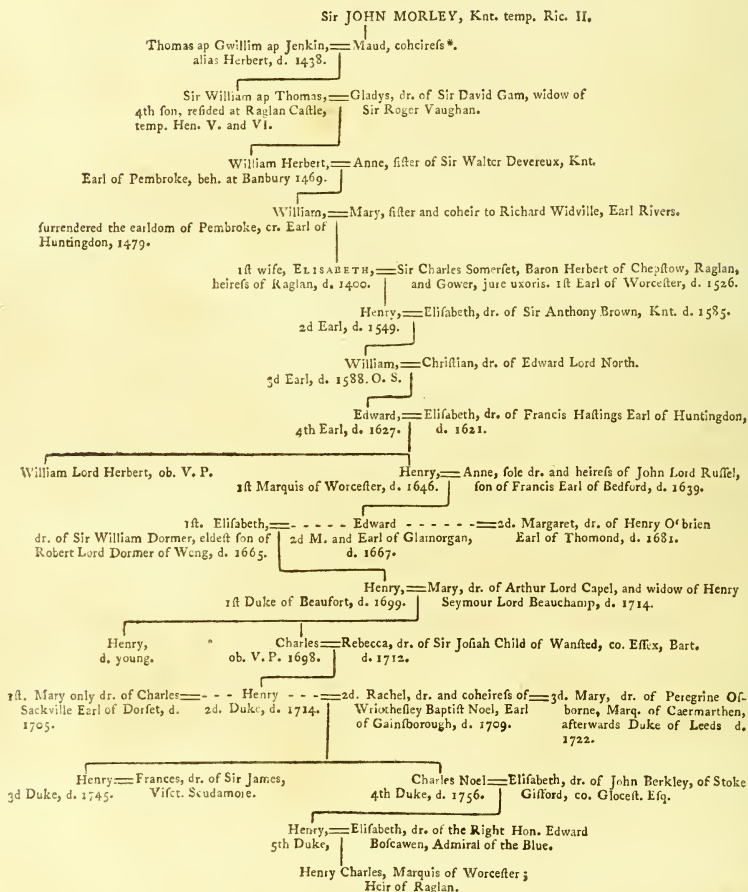
R.B. del.

W.B. sculp.

INSIDE VIEW OF RAGLAN CASTLE.

Published March 1800. by Cadell & Davies, Strand.

PROPRIETORS OF RAGLAN CASTLE.



* In the sepulchral inscription in Lanfandraed church (see p. 157) Maud is called daughter and coheir to Sir John Morley; yet I have not been able to discover any other daughter. It appears also, from the same inscription, that their son and heir was Philip: hence I have, perhaps erroneously, called him the eldest son (p. 155); for, according to a pedigree in the Herald's office, inserted in the Appendix No. 8. Gwillim ap Jenkin had four sons, Howell, Philip, Jenan, and Sir William ap Thomas. Howell was probably the ancestor of the Powells of Perthir (see p. 314). Philip was seated at Lanfandraed; of Jenan I can find no account; and Sir William ap Thomas, the youngest, obtained Raglan castle.

Without attempting to reconcile these contradictory accounts, I shall only observe, that Raglan castle does not appear to have continued in the possession of the Berkley family, and that sir William ap Thomas *, son of Maud, daughter of sir John Morley, by Thomas ap Gwillim ap Jenkin, who was seated at Lanfanfraed, was proprietor in the reign of Henry the fifth.

His eldest son, William, a man of distinguished talents, both in the civil and military line, was created, by Edward the fourth, lord of Raglan, Chepstow, and Gower. By the king's express order, his pedigree was traced by four bards, who are called "chieft men of skill, within the province of South Wales;" and he was commanded to discontinue the Welsh custom of changing the surname at every descent, and to assume that of Herbert, in honour of his ancestor Herbert Fitz Henry, who was chamberlain to king Henry the first †.

He was a great partisan of the house of York, and in high confidence with Edward the fourth, who entrusted him with the custody of the earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry the seventh. Richmond was detained for some time in the castle of Raglan, and treated with great humanity and attention. During the absence of lord Herbert, he was delivered from his confinement by his uncle Jasper, earl of Pembroke, and conveyed into Britany ‡.

In 1469 lord Herbert was created earl of Pembroke, on the attainder of Jasper, and warmly exerted himself in favour of his sovereign and benefactor, by raising an army of Welshmen from his numerous retainers, and marching at their head to oppose the Lancastrians under the earl of Warwick. Being taken prisoner at the battle of Danes Moor, he was beheaded at Banbury. He met his fate with the most noble fortitude and resignation, and gave a memorable instance of contempt of death, and fraternal affection: as he was laying his head on the block, he said to sir John Conyers, who ordered the execution, "Let me die, for I am old, but save my brother §, who is young, lusty, and hardy, mete and apt to serve the greatest prince in Christendom."

On

* See chapters 16 and 19.

† Pedigree of the Herberts in the Heralds Office, a copy of which is in the possession of William Jones, Esq. See also Dugdale, art. Herbert Earl of Pembroke.

‡ Buck's Life of Henry the Seventh.

§ Sir Richard Herbert of Coldbrook; for an account of whom, see the chapter on the church of Abergavenny.

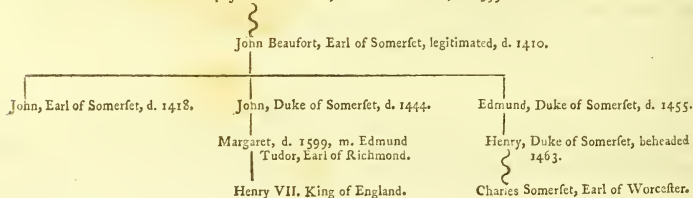
The earl of Pembroke was one of the richest and most puissant subjects of the realm. Dugdale has enumerated all the castles, manors, and lordships, of which he died seised; his titles, and the greater part of his possessions, together with the castle of Raglan, were inherited by his eldest son William; but Edward the fourth, being desirous to dignify his son the prince of Wales with the earldom of Pembroke, William resigned that title, and was, in 1479, created earl of Huntingdon*. Dying in 1491 without issue male, his daughter and heiress Elisabeth conveyed to her husband sir Charles Somerset, the castle of Raglan, and many other estates and honours.

Sir Charles Somerset was natural son of Henry Beaufort, duke of Somerset, who was beheaded in 1463 for his adherence to the house of Lancaster. He possessed considerable talents, and on the accession of Henry the seventh, to whom he was nearly allied in blood †, was rapidly advanced to high honours, and important offices of state; he was successively appointed a privy counsellor, admiral of the king's fleet at sea, a knight banneret, knight of the garter, captain of the guards, and lord chamberlain; he was twice employed as ambassador to the emperor Maximilian, the first time he conveyed the order of the garter, and the second he concluded two treaties against the Turks. In these negotiations, and other arduous affairs, he increased his credit with Henry the seventh, by his consummate address and prudence.

His high favour with the king, and his personal attractions, procured his marriage

* The titles of baron Herbert of Raglan, Chepstow, and Gower, were possessed by Sir Charles Somerset in right of his wife; but it is remarkable, that the title of Huntingdon became extinct, and the earldom did not descend to the brother of the earl of Huntingdon. Probably the Earldom of Pembroke being surrendered to the crown, the new peerage was entailed only on the heirs male of the earl of Huntingdon, and not extended to all the grantees of the former title.

† JOHN of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, d. 1399.





Harding sc.

ST. CHA. SOMERSET 1st EARL of WORCESTER.

From an Original Picture in the Possession of the Duke of Beaufort.

Published 1 April 1800 by Cudell & Davies Strand

marriage with Elifabeth, sole daughter and heiress of William earl of Huntingdon, and in her right, he bore the title of baron Herbert of Raglan, Chepstow, and Gower.

The death of Henry the seventh did not impede his future rise; he was equally beloved and esteemed by the new sovereign, who conferred on him additional honours, and higher dignities, which he amply deserved by his meritorious conduct. He highly distinguished himself as a soldier in the wars against France; at the siege of Teruenne, he commanded a division of 6000 men, and greatly contributed to force the place to surrender. He behaved with no less skill and intrepidity at the siege and capture of Tournay, where he had high command. Being deputed, on the pacification, to restore it to France, he acted with a spirit and dignity, which are highly applauded by lord Herbert of Cherbury in his history of Henry the eighth; he would not permit the marshal de Chatillon to enter Tournay with banners displayed, but furled; it being, he said, yielded voluntarily, and not obtained by conquest. In 1518, he ratified the articles of peace with France, and in 1521 mediated the pacification between Francis the first and Charles the fifth. In reward for these great services, he was appointed lord chamberlain for life, and advanced to the dignity of earl of Worcester.

He had the honour of representing the person of Henry the eighth, at the coronation of the princess Mary, queen of Louis the twelfth; and soon after the accession of Francis the first, was commissioned to betroth the king's infant daughter to the infant dauphin, according to an article of the recent pacification. But a report being circulated, which gave rise to much raillery among the wits of the times, that the young bridegroom was either not yet born, or had died soon after his birth, the earl of Worcester, with his colleague the bishop of Ely, were ordered to verify the child's existence. They accordingly repaired to the castle of Amboise, where the queen resided, and being introduced to the dauphin, affectionately embraced him *.

In these transactions he regulated his conduct with such caution and prudence, that he never in the smallest degree lost the favour of his capricious sovereign,

* Polydore Virgil, p. 613.

or excited the jealousy of the suspicious and all powerful favourite cardinal Wolsey.

He died in 1526, full of honours, in an advanced age, and was buried in the chapel of Windsor. In virtue of his descent from the royal blood, he was permitted to assume the arms of England, which are still borne by his illustrious descendant, the present duke of Beaufort.

Raglan castle continued to be the principal residence of his posterity, and from the strength of its fortifications, which were more adapted than the other castles to resist the effects of artillery, was long considered as the chief fortress in Monmouthshire.

The great event which distinguishes Raglan castle in the annals of British history, was the siege which it withstood against the parliamentary army, under the command of Fairfax. It was valiantly defended by Henry, first marquis of Worcester; and notwithstanding its extensive outworks, and scanty garrison, had the honour of being almost the last fortress in the kingdom, reduced by the republican troops.

Henry, fifth earl, and first marquis of Worcester, was born in 1562, and summoned to the first parliament of king James, during the life-time of his father. Though a man of superior abilities, and great estate, he is only twice mentioned by Camden in his reign of James. Being a Roman Catholic, he was reprimanded by the king, for sending his daughter to a nunnery at Brussels, and is maliciously censured, as being of the Spanish faction, and popishly inclined. In the reign of Charles the first, he highly distinguished himself by his signal services, and was one of the greatest sufferers in the royal cause; it was solely owing to his influence, and to the intrepidity with which he defended Raglan castle, that Monmouthshire so long resisted the parliamentary arms.

In 1642, the year in which he was created marquis of Worcester, he raised and supported an army of 1500 foot, and near 500 horse, under the command of his son, lord Herbert, afterwards well known by the title of earl of Glamorgan; and when the skill and activity of the parliamentary generals had dispersed this army, he maintained his position in Raglan castle, and retarded the annihilation of the king's authority in Monmouthshire.



HENRY SOMERSET, 1 MARQUIS OF WORCESTER

Pub^d Mar 20 1800 by Cadell & Davis: Strand.



In the midst of the civil commotions, Charles the first made several visits to Raglan castle, and was entertained with becoming magnificence. The marquis not only declined all offers of remuneration, but also advanced large sums; and when the king thanked him for the loans, replied; "Sir, I had your word for the money, but I never thought I should be so soon repayed; for now you have given me thanks, I have all I looked for." At another time, the king, apprehensive lest the stores of the garrison should be consumed by his suite, empowered him to exact from the country such provisions as were necessary for his maintenance, and recruit; "I humbly thank your majesty," he said, "but my castle will not stand long if it leans upon the country; I had rather be brought to a morsel of bread, than any morsels of bread should be brought me to entertain your majesty."

Several other conversations are detailed in a contemporary publication*, which prove the king's extreme condescension, and the frank garrulity of the venerable marquis. One in particular ought not to be omitted, which marks the foresight of the marquis, proves the mildness of the king's disposition, and his aversion to severe measures, amounting almost to weakness. Sir Trevor Williams, and four other principal gentlemen of Monmouthshire, being arrested for disloyalty, and conducted to Abergavenny, the king was advised to order them to an immediate trial, which must have ended in their conviction; but Charles, moved by the tears and protestations of sir Trevor Williams, suffered him to be released, on bail, and committed the others only to a temporary confinement. "The king told the marquis what he had done, and that when he saw them speak so honestly, he could not but give some credit to their words, so seconded by tears, and withal told the marquis that he had only sent them to prison; whereupon the marquis said, what to do? to payson that gar-rison? Sir, you should have done well to have heard their accusations, and then to have shewed what mercy you pleased. The king told him, that he heard they were accused by some contrary faction, as to themselves, who out of distast
they

* "Witty Apothegms delivered at several times, and on several occasions, by King James, King Charles I. and the Marquis of Worcester." Lond. 1658. 8°.

Another work, which was probably an abridgment of this, was printed in 1660, in one sheet quarto.

“ they bore to one another on old grudges, would be apt to charge them more
 “ home than the nature of their offences had deserved : to whom the marqués
 “ made this return, “ Well, Sir, you may chance to gain you the kingdom of
 “ heaven by such doings as these, but if ever you get the kingdom of England,
 “ by such wayes, I will be your bondman *.”

Soon after the king's retreat from Monmouthshire, the castle was slightly invested by sir Trevor Williams, and threatened by colonel Morgan, who was advancing from Worcester, at the head of a formidable detachment. The spirit of the aged marquis was not broken, and in answer to the first summons from colonel Morgan, dated June 3d, he refused to surrender, without the consent of the king, who was then in Scotland. This proposal being rejected, and colonel Morgan having blamed the marquis for maintaining a garrison in Raglan castle against the parliament, he returned an answer which deserves to be commemorated for its brevity and spirit.

“ Worthy Sir,

Ragland, June 4, 1646.

“ I must intreate you to make the best construction of the infirmities of an old
 “ man, in that according to your time prefixed, you had not the returne of this,
 “ which may give you full assurance that the true reason, if it were rightly
 “ understood, of my keeping forces here, is not in defiance of the parliament,
 “ but to preserve myselfe, according to the law of nature, from the insolencies of
 “ the common soldiers on both sides ; and seeing you think it not fit to grant
 “ a reasonable and civil request, we must here, to the last man, sell our lives as
 “ deare as we can ; this not out of obstinacy, or any ill affection, but merely to
 “ preserve that honour that I desire should attend me at my death. God assist
 “ them that are in the right. So I rest your friend and servant,

“ H. WORCESTER.”

After the rejection of a second summons, sir Thomas Fairfax came from Bath to superintend the siege in person. Under his inspection, the approaches were carried on with great vigour, in spite of repeated sallies ; and the gallant veteran, finding

* Apothegms of the Marquis of Worcester, quoted in Heath's Account of Raglan Castle.

finding his garrison, which at first consisted of only 800 men, greatly reduced, and entertaining no expectations of relief, surrendered on honourable terms on the 17th of August. The principal persons in the castle at the time of the evacuation, were, his sixth son, lord Charles, his daughter in law, the countess of Glamorgan, sir Philip and lady Jones, of Treowen, and the Rev. Dr. Bailey, sub-dean of Wells; whose extraordinary life and writings are recorded by Anthony Wood, and in the *Biographia Britannica* *.

The marquis of Worcester preserved, under this sad reverse of circumstances, the same calmness of temper, and facetious loquacity, which had marked his character in his prosperous days. The author of his apothegms has recorded a singular conversation, which passed between him and sir Thomas Fairfax, on the surrender of the castle †.

In

* Thomas Bayly was youngest son of Lewis Bayly, bishop of Bangor, and author of "The Practice of Piety." He was educated at Cambridge, but took his degree of Doctor in Divinity in the university of Oxford. In 1638 he was made sub-dean of Wells; and in 1646, according to Anthony Wood, acted as a commissioned officer in the defence of Raglan castle. He principally framed the articles of capitulation, and attended the marquis of Worcester to the hour of his death. After that event, he went abroad, and returning to England, published a Book, entitled "Certamen Religiosum, or a Conference concerning Religion, between king Charles the first, and the late marquis of Worcester, in Ragland castle. An. 1646." Lond. 8°. 1649. But this publication was considered as a prelude to his profession of the Roman catholic religion, and, perhaps without sufficient foundation, deemed a fabrication of his own. He published several treatises in favour of monarchy and episcopacy, and having too freely censured the Commonwealth, was imprisoned in Newgate. Escaping from his confinement, he repaired to Holland, and, to use Anthony Wood's quaint expressions, "having rambled abroad, much more in his mind, than he had in his body, he at last declared himself a Roman catholic." After writing several treatises in favour of that religion, he wandered from place to place, and died at Bononi. His end is uncertain, but he appears to have served as a common soldier, and to have died ob-

scurely in an hospital. He is by some supposed to have been the author of the "Witty Apothegms" before-mentioned. See Wood's *Athenæ Oxoniensibus*, vol. 1. art. 694.

† "After much conference between the marques and general Fairfax, wherein many things were requested of the general by the marques, and being, as he thought himself, happy in the attainment, his lordship was pleased make a merry petition to the general, as he was taking his leave, viz. in the behalf of a couple of pigeons, who were wont to come to his hand, and feed out of it constantly, in whose behalf he desired the general, that he would be pleased to give him his protection for them, fearing the little command that he should have over his soldiers in that behalf. To which the general said, I am glad to see your lordship so merry; Oh, said the marques, you have given me no other cause, and as hasty as you are, you shall not go until I have told you a story.

"There were two men going up Holborn in a cart to be hanged; one of them being very merry and jocond, gave offence unto the other, who was sad and dejected, insomuch as that the downcast man said unto the other, I wonder brother that you can be so frolick, considering the business that we are going about. Tush, answered the other, thou art a fool, thou wentest a thieving, and never thought what would become of thee, wherefore being on a sudden

In the correspondence with Fairfax, which preceded the capitulation, the marquis of Worcester seems to have strongly suspected, that the parliament would not adhere to the conditions. His apprehensions were not groundless, for on his arrival in London, he was committed to the custody of the Black Rod. He bitterly complained of this cruel usage, and deeply regretted that he had trusted himself to the *mercy* of parliament; a few hours before his death, he said to Dr. Bayley, "If to seize upon all my goods, to pull down my house, to sell my estate, and send for up such a weak body as mine was, so enfeebled by disease, in the dead of winter, and the winter of mine age, be merciful, what are they whose mercies are so cruel? Neither do I expect that they should stop at all this, for I fear they will persecute me after death."

Being informed, however, that parliament would permit him to be buried in his family vault, in Windsor chapel; he cried out, with great sprightliness of manner, "Why, God bless us all, why then I shall have a better castle when I am dead, than they took from me whilst I was alive." With so much cheerfulness and resignation did this hero expire, in the eighty-fifth year of his age.

The losses which the marquis and his family sustained, in support of the royal cause, cannot be easily calculated. Besides the large loans which he had advanced to the king, the maintenance of two armies, and the destruction of his forests, his estates, valued at £.20,000 a year, were confiscated. On the restoration, these estates were recovered by the family; but Raglan castle was dismantled, by order of the parliament, and has never since been inhabited.

In addition to the injury which the castle suffered from the parliamentary army, considerable dilapidations have been occasioned by the numerous tenants in the vicinity, who conveyed away the stone and other materials for the construction of farm houses, barns, and other buildings. No less than twenty-three

stair-

"sudden surprised, thou fallest into such a shaking fit,
"that I am ashamed too see thee in that condition;
"whereas I was resolved to be hanged, before ever I
"fell to stealing; which is the reason, nothing hap-
"pening strange or unexpected, I go so composed

"unto my death:—So, said the marquis, I resolved to-
"undergo whatsoever, even the worst of evils that
"you were able to lay upon me, before ever I took
"up arms for my sovereign, and therefore wonder not
"that I am so merry."

staircases * were taken down by these devastators ; but the present duke of Beaufort had no sooner succeeded to his estate, than he instantly gave orders that not a stone should be removed from its situation, and thus preserved these noble ruins from destruction.

According to tradition, Raglan castle contained a fine library, and a large collection of Welsh manuscripts principally formed by the earl of Pembroke, which were destroyed on the surrender. Mr. Owen informs me, that some of the Welsh authors quote a grammar by Geraint, contemporary with Alfred, of which a copy was preserved in this collection.

The church of Raglan, a neat stone building in the gothic style, with a square embattled tower, stands in the middle of the village. A chapel on the north side of the chancel was formerly a cemetery of the Beaufort family ; and several of the earls of Worcester are here interred.

The first was William, third earl of Worcester, who in 1549 succeeded his father Henry, at the age of twenty-two, in his honours and estates. He was constituted knight of the garter in the reign of Edward the sixth : he died on the 21st of February 1588, and was buried at Raglan on the last day of April. According to the directions of his will, his body was interred, under a tomb of marble, on the north side of the chapel. During the civil wars, the sepulchre was broken in pieces, and Sandford informs us, that in his time nothing remained “ but the canopy of alabaster, carved and gilt, and part of the figure of “ earl William in armour, with the collar of St. George about his neck, and the “ garter on his left leg †.” At present there are no traces of this monument.

The second earl of Worcester here interred, was Edward, son of the preceding, who enjoyed the favour of queen Elizabeth, king James and Charles, and held several high places of trust and state. In 1593 he was instituted knight of the garter ; and being the best horseman and tilter of his age, was appointed master of the horse ; afterwards he became lord privy seal, and one of the lords commissioners for exercising the office of earl marshal of England. He gave a lustre

to

* Heath, p. 80. † Sandford and Stebbing's Genealogical History, &c. p. 347.

to his station by being, as Sandford says, “ a great favourer of learning and good literature. He deceased full of honour and years, about the 79th year of his age, at Worcester house, in the Strand, and parish of St. Clement Danes, London, on Monday, being the 3d of March, anno 1627. His corpse being conveyed to Raglan, was on Sunday, the 30th of the same month (anno 1628) deposited under a sumptuous tomb (erected in his life-time) affixed to the south wall of his own chapel, adjoining to the chancel of the parish church of Raglan aforesaid; upon which were placed the portraitures of this earl Edward (in the habit of the order) and his countess, with thirteen of their children. But the same hammer of rebellion which defaced earl William’s tomb, broke in pieces the sepulchre also of this Edward, earl of Worcester; when the parliament soldiers, being seized of the church, were as revengeful in destroying the monuments of the dead father and grandfather, as the living son Henry, the first marquis of Worcester, was loyal and resolved in defending against them his castle of Raglan*.”

Two headless and mutilated alabaster figures, of a man with a collar of the garter, and of a woman, some irons from which the banners were suspended, an ancient helmet, and a portcullis, the crest of the Beaufort family, are almost the only remains of this splendid monument.

The third, whose ashes repose in this church, is Edward, sixth earl and second marquis of Worcester; a personage remarkable in the history of the times. In addition to his hereditary titles, he was created earl of Glamorgan†, under which name he is principally known, on account of his extraordinary mission in Ireland for the purpose of settling a treaty with the Roman catholics, and leading an army to the assistance of Charles the first. The unlimited confidence reposed in him, and the full powers with which he was entrusted, are proved by a secret commission dated 1644, the most extraordinary ever granted by a sovereign to a subject: he was appointed generalissimo of three armies, and admiral, with the nomination of the officers; he was empowered to raise money, by the sale of the

* Sandford, p. 349.

† It has been asserted, that he was also created baron Beaufort of Caldecot and Grismount; and

these titles are mentioned in the commission granted by king Charles the first, but are not enumerated in the inscription placed on his coffin.



Harding sc

EDWARD 2 M^s of WORCESTER & EARL of GLAMORGAN

From an Original Picture in the Collection of His Grace the Duke of Beaufort

Published July 1. 1800, by Cadell & Davies Strand

the regal rights and prerogatives; to create, by blank patents, all titles from a baronet to a marquis; and he received the order of the garter, with the reversion of the dukedom of Somerset. In addition to these honours, the princess Elifabeth was promised to his son in marriage, with a portion of £.300,000, which the king acknowledged to have been expended, by him and the marquis his father, in the royal service*.

The character of Glamorgan was ill calculated to conduct an enterprise of such extreme delicacy, so as not to excite the jealousy of the marquis of Ormond, lord lieutenant, lord Digby, secretary of state, and the other protestant ministers of the Irish government. He possessed many excellent qualities both of the head and heart; he was loyal, sincere, active, brave, of elegant manners, and conciliating address; but he was ardent, impetuous, bigoted, indiscreet, vain. His sanguine imagination over-rated his own powers, and his fanatic zeal for the Roman catholic religion, roused the indignation of the king's protestant counsellors. By his unbounded concessions, and lavish grants to the papists, he concluded a peace, and obtained a body of ten thousand men; but the articles of this treaty being accidentally discovered, created a general outcry: he was arrested by Ormond and Digby, and charged with high treason, for acting without the king's authority. Copies of the articles, and his intercepted correspondence, being transmitted to England, the king, in a message to parliament, solemnly disavowed the conduct of Glamorgan, and declared that he had no commission to treat with the catholics without the privity and direction of the lord lieutenant.

This public disavowal, however, did not allay the general suspicions of the king's insincerity, which were heightened by the subsequent liberation and employment of Glamorgan to hasten the conclusion of the treaty between Ormond and the catholics.

Unfortunately, however, the vanity and indiscretion of Glamorgan, the too cautious proceedings of Ormond, the inflexible opposition of Digby, and the intractable temper of the pope's nuncio, delayed the embarkation of the troops, until the unfavourable state of the king's affairs prevented their co-operation. Although volumes have been written on this subject, yet the mystery which in-

volves

* A copy of this commission is given in Collins's Peerage, vol. 1. p. 206.

volves the conduct of the king and Glamorgan during this whole transaction, has never been sufficiently unfolded. The issue was no less unsuccessful than degrading; and no event, in the whole reign of Charles the first, gave deeper concern to his conscientious adherents, or greater triumph to his enemies.

Clarendon, in particular, was so much affected with this mysterious business, that he makes no mention of it in the History of the Rebellion, but in a private letter to secretary Nicholas, censures it in the strongest terms of concern and disapprobation: "I care not how little I say in that business of Ireland, since those strange powers and instructions given to your favourite Glamorgan, which appear to me inexcusable to justice, piety, and prudence. Oh! Mr. Secretary, those stratagems have given me more sad hours than all the misfortunes which have befallen the king*."

From this period, the name of Glamorgan scarcely occurs in the history of the times. On the death of his gallant father, he assumed the title of marquis of Worcester, but did not succeed to his estates, which were confiscated, and granted in part to Oliver Cromwell. On the annihilation of the royal party, he followed the fortunes of Charles the second, and became a refugee at the court of France. Being dispatched, in 1652, into England, by the exiled king, for the purpose of procuring private intelligence and supplies, he was discovered, and imprisoned in the tower; where, as Kennett observes, "he was threatened with a speedy trial, and worse punished by a long confinement †."

I cannot ascertain the period of his confinement, or the time of his liberation; from a letter, which he wrote in December 1656 to secretary Thurloe ‡, it

appears,

* Clarendon's State Papers, vol. 2. p. 337. quoted in Granger's Biographical History.

† History of England, vol. 3. p. 128.

‡ Marquis of Worcester to Secretary Thurloe.

Right Honourable, December 18, 1656.

I doe confesse, that theould saying is, that proffered service is not valued, in that respect I wonder not to have my endeavours see little sett by. In a word, I am very well pleased to acquiesce, if his highnesse or your honour thinke me worthy of one quarter of an hour's audience; yet I must needs say, that if esteemed of, I am able to doe his highnesse more service than any one subject of his three nations; and though after a message by Mr. Noell, and a letter of

mine delivered by my owne hands to Mr. Owag, and as he tould me, by him to your honour, I cannot gett a time assigned me to wayte upon you. I here sende you a true copy of Don Alonzo his answaere to me, and do assure you, that I have in readinesse a person, whom you yourself will confesse Don Alonzo cannot except against: soe that there only resteth needfull your approbation; when your honour shall have reade this and the copyys of the Don's letter, I have entreated and enjoyned Mr. Noell to bring them me backe, and in his presence I will burn them, and remain silent for the future in any thing of this nature, but in all things els, your honour's most affectionate friend and humble servant.—Worcester.

appears, that he requested an audience of Cromwell, and offered to make discoveries of great importance; but his advances were at first slighted. Afterwards, however, his overtures seem to have been favourably received, and his son, at least, enjoyed the confidence and protection of Oliver Cromwell, was gratified with apartments at Whitehall, and a pension of £.2000 per annum*.

His conduct towards Cromwell did not offend the king: on the restoration he was re-instated in his hereditary possessions, and treated with high marks of regard and confidence. He does not appear to have interfered in the political transactions of the times, but devoted himself wholly to literary pursuits; in 1663 he published a "Century of the Names and Scantlings of such Inventions as I can at present call to mind to have tried and perfected."

A singular contrariety of opinion has been formed of his literary character. The late earl of Orford calls the noble author a fantastic man, and censures his work as an amazing piece of folly, "being a list of a hundred projects, most of them impossibilities:" Granger, on the contrary, is warm in its praise; and on the authority of an excellent judge, considers the author as one of the greatest mechanical geniuses that ever appeared in the world. We may justly incline to the opinion of Granger, should the invention of the steam engine† have owed its rise

* "About this time, the lord Herbert, being bred a Papist, and sent into France, came over and made his court to Oliver Cromwell, but was first advised to shew himself in Whitehall chapel, that he was conformable to the religion then in fashion, and then was introduced, by colonel Philip Jones, to kiss the Protector's hand, who afterwards became his convert, and a great favourite; had £.2000. per annum given him, and lodgings assigned him at Whitehall." Secret Memoirs of Monmouthshire. App. p. 105.

† It appears, from a passage in the Experimental Philosophy of Dr. Defaguliers, that captain Savary derived this invention of the fire engine, since called the steam engine, from the sixty-eighth article in the Century of Scantlings; "and that to conceal his original, he bought up all the Marquis's books and burnt them."

"An admirable and most forcible way to drive up

water by fire, not by drawing or sucking it upwards, for that must be, as the Philosopher calleth it, *intra spheram activitatis*, which is but at such a distance. But this way hath no bounder, if the vessels be strong enough, for I have taken a piece of a whole cannon whereof the end was burst, and filled it three quarters full of water, stopping and skruing up the broken end, as also the touch-hole, and making a constant fire under it, within twenty-four hours it burst, and made a great crack; so that having a way to make my vessels so that they are strengthened by the force within them, and the one to fill after the other, I have seen the water run like a constant fountain stream forty feet high; one vessel of water, rarified by fire, driveth up forty of cold water. And a man that tends the work is but to turn two cocks, that one vessel of water being consumed, another begins to force and re-fill with cold water, and so successively, the fire being tended and kept constant, which the

clif-

rife to this "Century of Scantlings;" an invention which alone would entitle the author to immortality*."

He died in 1667; his body was conveyed with funeral solemnity from London, and interred in the vault under the chapel. According to Sandford, who attended the burial, a brass plate, containing a simple Latin inscription, was placed on his coffin†.

self-fame person may likewise abundantly perform in the interim between the necessity of turning the said cocks."

On account of the number of copies destroyed by captain Savary, this curious work is extremely rare. It is given in the eighteenth volume of the Gentleman's Magazine.

* See Walpole's Royal and Noble Authors, art. Edward Somerfet marquis of Worcester. Granger's Biographical History of England, vol. 3. p. 19.

† "Depositum Illustrissimi Principis Edwardi Marchionis & Comitis Wigorniae, Comitis de Glamorgan, Baronis Herbert de Raglan, Chepstow & Gower, nec non serenissimo nuper Domino Regi Carolo primo, Southwalliae locum tenentis: qui obiit apud Lond. tertio die Aprilis, An. Dom. M,DC,LXVII."

Genealogical History, p. 358.

CHAPTER 16.

*Lanfanfraed House and Church.—Pant y Goitre.—Clytha House and Castle.—
Lanarth Court.—Trostre Forge.—Kemeys Commander.—Trostre House and
Church.—Beltus Newydd.*

FROM Raglan I passed through a rich and undulating country, abounding in picturesque views, to Lanfanfraed, the residence of James Greene, esq. member for Arundel. This place is remarkable in the history of Monmouthshire, as the ancient seat of Thomas ap Gwillim, from whom the earls of Pembroke, Powis, and Caernarvon, are descended by the male, and the dukes of Beaufort by the female line. His father was lord of Werndee; he himself was originally seated at Perthir, near Monmouth; but possessed Lanfanfraed in the reign of Richard the second, and dying in 1438, was buried in the church. He seems to have acquired Lanfanfraed by his marriage with Maud, daughter of sir John Morley, knight, lord of Raglan castle. Lanfanfraed was most probably considered as the principal place of residence, for it was inherited by his eldest son and heir, Philip ap Thomas, and Raglan castle descended to the second son, sir William ap Thomas, father of the earl of Pembroke. Philip ap Thomas dying in 1460, Lanfanfraed passed to his descendants; on the extinction of the male line, was conveyed by Susan, sole surviving daughter and heiress of Henry Jones, to her husband, George Rickards, esq. of Bredon's Norton, in the county of Worcester, and is now the property of their son John Rickards, esq.

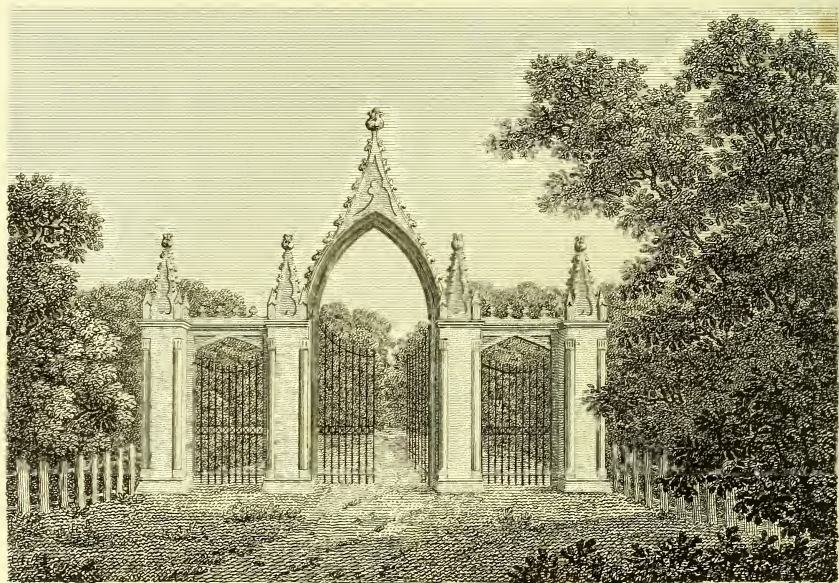
A small part only of the original structure now remains; the mansion
X 2 being

being converted, from a farm house, by Mr. Greene, the present tenant, into a comfortable habitation. The view from the lawn before the house, which harmonises with the adjacent country, is extremely pleasing: it commands an undulating tract, rising from the banks of the Usk, bounded by a semicircular chain of fertile eminences, and backed by hills and mountains. To the south-west appears Clytha castle, a picturesque object, on the slope of an eminence, swelling from the banks of the Usk, and crowned by the Coed y Bunedd; from thence, a lower ridge gradually descends towards the vale, and terminates in a rich knoll of wood at Pant y Goetre. To the north-west appears the magnificent Bloreng; on the north the elegant cone of the Sugar Loaf towers above the swell of the little Skyrrid, and to the east rises the abrupt ridge of the great Skyrrid.

Lansanfraed house is situated five miles and a half from Abergavenny, ten from Monmouth, four from Raglan, and seven from Usk; and its central position renders it extremely convenient for the purpose of exploring the county. Unacquainted with a single gentleman, when I first entered the county, I was introduced to Mr. Greene, by my friend sir Richard Hoare; his hospitable mansion was open to me at all times and on all occasions, without form or ceremony; I was left at full liberty to make excursions as my fancy or inclination suggested, and on my return, after the fatigues of the day, I enjoyed the comforts of an agreeable society. In this delightful residence, I first conceived the plan of writing a tour in Monmouthshire; Mr. Greene zealously encouraged and assisted me in the prosecution of the work; through his introduction, I became acquainted with the principal gentlemen and men of letters, and obtained access to various documents, and interesting papers.

The church of Lansanfraed is very ancient, a circumstance sufficiently evident, from the simplicity of its form, which is like a barn, with a small belfry, containing two bells, the ropes descending into the church. It has been lately repaired by Mr. Rickards, the patron of the living, and is much neater than many of the parish churches in Monmouthshire.

On the north wall of the nave is a curious sepulchral inscription, of which an exact transcript is here given, as well because it serves to illustrate the pedigree
of



W. Byrne del.
To William Jones Esq. this View of CLYTHA GATEWAY, Engraved at his Expence?
Is inscribed by his obliged Servant W. Cox.
Published March 1800, by Cadell & Davies, Strand.

of the Herbert family, as because inaccurate copies of it have been presented to the public.

NERE THIS PLACE LY ENTERRED THESE DEAD BODIES VNDERNAMED
 THOM: G L M: IENK: ESQ 8^o IVL: 1438 & MAVD HIS WIFE DA TO S^r: IOHN MOR-
 LEY KNIGHT & HIS COHE: PHIL: THERE SONE & HEIRE 9^o: NO: 1460 & IOHAN
 HIS WIFE, DA & HEIRE OF THO: BLETHIN OF PENTRE, ESQ 7^o: IVN: 1458:
 DAVID THERE SONE & HEIRE 19^o: DE: 1510: KATHE: HIS WIFE DA: TO S^r: ROGER VAH-
 AN KNIGHT 26: MAR: 1520: THOM: THERE SONE & HEIRE 3^o: APR: 1537: 8
 IANE HIS WIFE: DA: TO IOHN THO OF TRE OWEN ESQ: 13^o: AVG: 1533: IOHN
 THERE SONE AND HEIRE 30^o: MAII: 1553: BVT GWEN HIS WIFE DA: TO
 EDWA: IONES OF ABERGA: GEN: WAS EVRVIED IN HER BROTHER EDWARS
 SEPVLCER ON THE NORTHE SIDE OF THE HIGHE ALTAR IN SAINT MARIES
 THERE: 23: SEP: 1597: WATER THEIRE SONE AND HEIRE 17^o: AP: 1606 AND
 LETTIS HIS WIFE DA: OF IOHN WILLMS, OE NEWPO: GEN: 19^o IAN: 1623.

14 SEP:	FOR AN ETERNAL TOKEN OF RESPECT TO YOV MY SIRES, THESE STONES I DOE ERECT; YOVR WORTHY BONES DESERV OF ME IN BRASS; A RARER TOMBE THEN STATELY HATTON HAS: BVT SITH MY MENS NO PART OF SVCH AFOORDS INSTEDE THEREOF ACCEPT THIS TOMBE OF WORDS.	1624.
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In the vicinity of Lananfraed are several country seats, which form an agreeable neighbourhood; and add to the beauty of the surrounding scenery, by the improved state of cultivation, and the richness of their groves and plantations.

Pant y Goitre, the seat of Dr. Hooper, occupies a beautiful spot on the opposite bank of the Usk; it is surrounded with rich meadows, and backed by hanging groves of oak, and other timber trees. The walks on the side of the river are delightful, and the views from the well-wooded knoll, which overshadows the house, are equally pleasing, grand, and diversified; presenting the assemblage of wood, water, vales, hills, and mountains, in different points of view from those which had hitherto arrested my attention.

I passed some agreeable days at Clytha House, the seat of William Jones, esq. uncle of Mr. Jones of Lanarth, which is situated at the junction of the Usk and Monmouth roads. A beautiful gothic gateway (of which an engraving is annexed).

nexed) leads to the house, which is a comfortable and commodious mansion. Mr. Jones has considerably improved the grounds by plantations, and displayed his taste, as well as his affection to the memory of a beloved wife, by building Clytha Castle, which is an ornament to his residence, and to the surrounding country.

The motives which gave rise to the construction of this elegant edifice, are well displayed in the inscription :

“ This building was erected in the year 1790, by
William Jones of Clytha House, Esq;
Fourth Son of John Jones,
of Lanarth Court, Monmouthshire, Esq; and
Husband to Elizabeth, the last surviving Child
of Sir William Morgan of Tredegar, K. B.
and Grand-daughter of The most noble William,
Second Duke of Devonshire.

It was undertaken for the Purpose of relieving a Mind
Sincerely afflicted, by the Loss of a most excellent Wife ;
Whose Remains were deposited
in Lanarth Church Yard *, A. D. 1787,
and to the Memory of whose Virtues
This Tablet is dedicated.

The castle is built on the brow of an eminence mantled with wood, and at the abrupt termination of the chain of hills, which bounds the southern extremity of the vale of the Usk. It commands a view of a fertile and well-wooded region, swelling from the sinuous banks of the river, into gentle undulations, and gradually expanding into hills and mountains ; among these, the Skyrrid, the Sugar Loaf, and the Bloreng, are most conspicuous and contrasted. From this point of view, the beauty of the landscape is heightened by numerous churches, differing in shape and colour, rising amid tufts of trees, or overhanging the banks of the Usk.

There

* The inscription to her memory, written by Mr. Jones, and placed in the chancel of the church of Lanarth, is inserted in the Appendix.



Edith Palmer del.

W. Byrne sculp.

CLYTHA

CASTLE.



This Plate Engraved at his Expense,

Obliged Servant. W. P. 2

To William Jones Esq.

As inscribed by his

There are prospects far more extensive but few so pleasing: nature has placed the hills and mountains at such fortunate distances from this point of view, that the eye is lost in the endless variety of the bewitching scenery, and knows not on what object to rest. On ceasing to contemplate this delightful prospect, I did not retire from the building without sympathising with the regret, and applauding the gratitude, affection, and taste of the owner.

Lanarth Court, the seat of John Jones, esq. stands not far from the Abergavenny road, and about a mile and a half from Lanfandraed. According to the most authentic documents, Mr. Jones is lineally descended from Henry Fitz Herbert, chamberlain to king Henry the first, the common ancestor of the illustrious family of the Herberts. It appears from an ancient pedigree, in the possession of William Jones, esq. of Clytha House, that Howel, son of Gwillim, lord of Werndee, was seated at Treowen, near Monmouth, and that his grandson David, following the standard of his cousin, the earl of Pembroke, was slain at the battle of Banbury, fighting for the white rose.

In the reign of Henry the eighth, his descendant, William ap John, first adopted the English custom of assuming a fixed surname; and John was softened into Jones, which has since been retained by this branch of the family. His great grandson, sir Philip Jones, knight, was a warm advocate for the cause of royalty: he was lieutenant colonel of the troops raised in Monmouthshire for the support of Charles the first, and was engaged in the defence of Raglan castle, when it surrendered to Fairfax. Soon after the restoration, William, son of Sir Philip Jones, transferred the residence from Treowen to Lanarth Court, which has since continued to be the principal seat of the family.

The ancient mansion of Lanarth Court was pulled down by the present proprietor, and a handsome house built on its site: the front is ornamented with an elegant portico, resembling that of the temple of Pæstum; it stands on a gentle rise, and has the peculiarity of commanding a view wholly different from the general aspect of the scenery in this part of Monmouthshire. In a country abounding in hills and mountains, not a single hill or mountain is seen from the

front

front of the house; a circumstance which pleased rather than disappointed me; the eye, long fatiated with extensive and mountainous prospects, reposes with satisfaction on a quiet and retired vale. The view, however, would be rendered still more delightful, if the gentle eminences which rise in front of the house were enriched with judicious and ornamental plantations.

In company with Mr. Rickards, proprietor of Lanfanfraed, I made an excursion from Clytha house. We walked to the banks of the Ufk, nearly opposite to the church of Lanvair Kilgeden, which is singularly picturesque, from its solitary situation in the midst of fields, at a distance from any house, and surrounded by venerable yews. Here the river, which had hitherto flowed in a sinuous course, is interrupted by the Clytha hills, turns at right angles, and runs in a strait direction under the precipitous and woody ridge on which the castle is situated. We descended in a boat to Trostrey forge, and disembarked at a weir, where I took an opportunity of examining its structure, and observed the method of catching salmon.

An embankment of stakes and stones, is thrown diagonally across the river, between two and three hundred yards in length: in the middle of the weir is a vacancy, provided with an iron grate, through which a considerable body of the river rushes with great impetuosity. At the lower part of the weir, on one side of this stream, is a large wooden box, perforated with holes, to admit the water and air, with an aperture, to which is affixed a long round wicker basket, resembling a tunnel. This aperture is closed with a small iron grate, which opens within the box, like a trap door, and falls to its original position, by its own weight. A square wooden frame, similar to those used at mills for the purpose of catching eels, extends nearly across the whole of the stream, below the large iron grate, leaving only sufficient room for the salmon. The fish, in his migration, is obliged to ascend this narrow opening, and having passed the wooden frame, is stopped by the grate. Instead of retreating down the narrow pass, by which he ascended, he turns sideways, is hurried by the rapidity of the stream along a narrow current, leading through the tunnel, forces up the trap door,

door, which immediately falls down behind him, and is thus secured in the box. The box contained several salmon; one of which did not weigh less than thirty pounds.

Troftrey Forge is rented by Harvey, Wafon, and company, from Sir Samuel Fludyer. The place contains little worthy of observation, except an inscription over the door, which marks the extraordinary height of the Usk:

“Flood, February 16th 1795. Harvey, Wafon, and Company, Bristol.”

This memorial will convey some idea of the dreadful inundations to which the country, in the vicinity of the river, is subject; the inscription is fourteen feet above the ground, and twenty-two above the ordinary level of the river: the water rose to this uncommon height in the space of twelve hours. Several of the workmen witnessed the inundation, and Mr. Wafon, one of the proprietors, confirmed to me the truth of the memorial; fortunately, however, the river subsided almost as rapidly as it had increased.

The bar iron manufactured at this forge, is sent to Tredonnoc bridge by land, from thence conveyed down the Usk to Newport, and exported to Bristol. A little beyond the forge the river is no longer navigable, even for small vessels; it flows in a deep abyss amid hills and woods, until it emerges near the town of Usk.

We here mounted our horses, and rode through thickets across the fields, to Kemeys Commander, a small village which, according to a pedigree of the Kemeys family, is supposed to derive its name from Edward Kemeys, who was commander of the army under Hamlet, son of Dru, duc de Baladun, at the conquest of Upper Gwent. As a reward for his military services, he is said to have received the lordships of Kemeys Commander, and Little Kemeys, which I visited in my excursion from Caerleon to Usk. It is however more probable that it was denominated Kemeys Commander, because it was a commandery of the knights templars, to whom, according to Bacon, the patronage of the church belonged*. The church is a gothic building of small dimensions, simple form, and ancient appearance, with a low belfry, like that of Malpas. In the church

Y

yard

* Liber Regis, p. 1098.

yard is a singular phenomenon, which was pointed out to me by Mr. Rickards: within a hollow yew tree, fifteen feet in girth, is inclosed an oak, not less than seven feet in circumference; its branches rise to a considerable height, and overshadow the parent trunk, forming a singular combination of foliage.

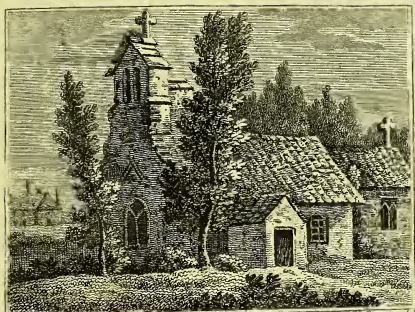
We next rode through a narrow and stony lane to the banks of the Usk, and looked down from the summit of a wooded precipice on a large weir, over which the river fell in a considerable cataract. This salmon fishery is rented by Mr. Rhees, post-master of Usk, from sir Samuel Fludyer; it is held by a lease of three lives, renewable on a certain fine, and the proprietor is bound to keep the weir in repair; the expence being so considerable as to exceed the annual rent, the lessor repeatedly offered to surrender it wholly to the tenant, which has been as often declined: several law-suits have ensued, and it was at length decided that, at the expiration of three lives, the covenant should be void, and the property revert wholly to the lessor.

In our return to Clytha, we visited Trostrey House, the ancient seat of the family of Hughes, now a farm house. The church of Trostrey resembles that of Kemeys Commander, in its shape and appearance; but the situation is extremely wild and romantic: it stands on a gentle rise, in the midst of a wood, remote from any habitation, and seems rather the solitary chapel of a hermit, than the church of a cultivated district. On the east wall of the chancel is a tablet erected to the memory of Charles Hughes, brother to Thomas Hughes of Moinscourt, who was celebrated in the annals of this country for his attachment to the cause of king Charles the first. He died 1676, aged 57, and his successors retained possession of Trostrey house and estate, until it was purchased by Valentine Morris, by whom it was sold to sir Samuel Fludyer, the present proprietor.

Entering the high road, from Usk to Abergavenny, we passed through the village of Bettus Newydd, and visited the church, which from its size and form seems to have been built at the same period with those of Trostrey and Kemeys Commander. It is, however, worthy of particular observation, as the ancient

rood-loft is entire, and a large wooden cross is still affixed at its eastern extremity; the carved work of the gallery is not inelegant.

Beyond Bettus Newydd the road ascends a gentle rise, from which the traveller who pursues this route, from the New Passage, first catches a view of the romantic cluster of mountains in the neighbourhood of Abergavenny; and from their sudden appearance and contrasted forms, receives lively impressions of delight and admiration.



See Rich. & Moore's Map of Wales.

LANSANFRAED CHURCH.

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CHAPTER 17.

*Abergavenny.—Circumjacent Mountains.—The Blorengé.—Sugar Loaf.—Skyrriid.—
Establishment of the Free School.*

THE position of Abergavenny is most delightful; it stands at the extremity of a pass where the mountains abruptly terminate, and the vale of the Usk begins to take a greater expansion. The name * is derived from its situation at the mouth of the Gavenny, which flows by the outskirts of the town, and falls into the Usk, to the south-west of the castle.

Abergavenny stretches at the feet of hills and mountains, which gradually swelling from the vale, unite the extremes of wildness and fertility, and are interesting from the contrast of their shape and appearance.

To the west rises the Blorengé, magnificent from its height and continuity; it forms the northern extremity of the chain, which reaches from Pont y Pool, and terminates near the confines of the county. The highest part towers above the Usk, and the town of Abergavenny; its sides are concave; the summit is covered with russet herbage, without a single bush; the midland parts are chequered with underwood, intermixed with fertile meadows, and the base is clothed with timber trees. At the northern extremity, the rich knoll of Upper Lanfoist presents a wood of fine oak, ash, and elm, forming an extensive mantle of thick and dark foliage.

To the north are the Pen y Vale hills, which sweep from the extremity of the town, and rise into four undulating eminences: they appear at a little distance to be separate, but are connected together, and intersected by narrow glens, which
are

* All the Welsh names of towns distinguished by fall of a lesser water into a greater: thus Abergavenny, the prefix Aber, indicate their situation at the junction of two rivers; Aber in Welsh signifying the



See Note at Page 200.

W. Byrne del.

ABERGAVENNY, WITH A DISTANT VIEW OF THE SKYRRID.

are watered by lively and murmuring streams that rise on their sides, and swell the Usk with their tributary waters. These four eminences are known by distinct appellations. The Derry, the most easterly, is of a convex shape, and derives its name from a grove of small oaks, which clothes its sides and summit; the next is the Rolben; the third is the Graig Lanwenarth, and the fourth the hill Lanwenarth; both so called from their situation in the parish, and above the church of Lanwenarth.

These four hills support, on their broad and extensive base, the Pen y Vale *, called the Sugar Loaf, from its shape. The undulating outline of this elegant summit, is embossed in the middle with the cone, which assumes different appearances :

“ Mille habet ornatus mille *decenter* habet.”

It looks like a piked ridge from the opposite side of the Usk; sometimes appears in a globular shape, but at a distance, and particularly at the south-eastern side of the Skyrrid, assumes the form of a pyramid, and resembles the crater of a volcano. This cone is the highest object in the vicinity, has nothing rugged or craggy, and is characterised by smoothness and beauty.

The most singular and interesting mountain in the neighbourhood, is the Great Skyrrid, or St. Michael's Mount, which stretches from north to south, or more accurately from north-east to south-west: it is an insulated mount, rising abruptly from the plain; the north-eastern side appears a steep ridge of a brown hue; towards the south and south-east, it slopes gradually into cultivation. The summit is covered with heath, or russet herbage, and its feet are clothed with wood, or enriched with corn and pasture.

In one point of view, particularly from the Little Skyrrid, it assumes the appearance of an enormous barrow, or tumulus, piled up by the hands of giants. To the north it terminates in a bold and craggy precipice, divided into two points, quaintly,

* *Pen y Vale*; supposed by some to be a corruption of *Pen y foel*, or the barren top, pronounced *Pen y voel*. Mr. Owen, however, has favoured me with a more probable etymology; *Val*, standing alone, out of the construction of a sentence, would be *Bal*, which is a common term for a sugar-loaf hill. So the poet, David ap Gwilym, speaking of a fine complexion, says, “ *Lliw manod balodd*,” “ the hue of the driven snow of the PEAKS.” In another passage, he says, “ *Lliw eiry y wâl*,” “ the hue of the snow of the PEAK.”

quaintly, but not inaccurately called by Stukeley, “ bipartite at top, and Parnassus like *,” this double summit is occasioned by a fissure or rent, from which the name of Skyrrid is supposed to be derived †. At a small distance from Lanvihangel, on the Herefordshire road, this precipitous rock seems like two detached mountains, of a conical shape, and as I observed some clouds resting on the highest summit, its stupendous crag appeared like the rugged crater of a volcano, vomiting volumes of smoke.

The Little Skyrrid is a beautiful swelling hill, covered on its sides and summit with plantations; its elegant form and fertile appearance are finely contrasted with the rugged and broken ridge of the Great Skyrrid.

The respective heights of these mountains, above the mouth of the Gavenny, were taken barometrically by general Roy :

	Feet.
The summit of the Sugar Loaf	- 1852.
of the Skyrrid	- 1498.
of the Little Skyrrid	- 765.
of the Bloreng	- 1720.

The Ufk, which rises in Brecknockshire, is here a mountain-torrent; and from its rapid and transparent stream, flowing through fields of corn and pasture, gives a lively colouring to the rich woods which tower above and around it.

The Gavenny, or as it is called by the natives, the Kenvy, rises in the vicinity of Lanvihangel, and after flowing between the Skyrrid and the Hereford road, bends to Landeilo Bertholly, flows round the southern side of Abergavenny, and falls into the Ufk, near the ruins of the castle.

The Kibby, a small brook, rises in the upper part of the Derry, waters a narrow glen between the Derry and Rolben, and after flowing through the town, and supplying it with water, falls into the Gavenny, not far from its junction with the Ufk.

Abergavenny

* Stukeley's Itin. Curios. vol. 1. p. 70.

to others, of *Ygyryd*, or rough, either of which is equally applicable.

† According to some, Skyrrid is a corruption of *Ygyrraed*, implying separations or fissures; according

Abergavenny is generally allowed, by the best antiquaries, to be the Gobannium of Antonine. The similarity between the ancient and modern name, the agreement of its distance from Caerleon, on one side through Burrium or Usk, and on the other from Uriconium or Wroxeter, through Magna or Kenchester, with those specified in the Itineraries, and the discovery of various Roman antiquities, fully ascertain this point *. It may not, however, be superfluous to add a proof of the residence of the Romans in these parts, not hitherto noticed, and which indicates that the ancient Gobannium occupied the same side of the river as the present town: the parish of Lanwenarth is divided by the Usk, and the two parts are still distinguished by Latin appellations; the part nearest to Abergavenny, on the left bank of the Usk, is called Lanwenarth *citra*, or on this side the Usk; and the other division, Lanwenarth *ultra*, or on the other side. The parish of Landeilo Bertholly is also called *citra* and *ultra*, from its situation on each side of the Gavenny.

Abergavenny occupies a gentle slope, from the foot of the Derry to the left bank of the Usk. The town is long and straggling, and the streets are in general narrow, although within a few years it has been much improved in appearance. The principal street is not deficient in breadth; an old market-house †, which embarrassed the passage, has been removed, and a neat and convenient place has been formed in a better situation.

Abergavenny was once a corporate town, and a place of great population, trade, and importance. Leland calls it "*a faire waulled town, meately well inhabited* ‡;" and a manuscript account of Monmouthshire, collected in 1602 by George Owen, of Henllys, in Pembrokehire, esq. describes it as "*a fine town, wealthy*

* See Horsley.—Strange.

† The old market-house in Abergavenny was badly situated, just in the middle of the principal street in the town, which it so nearly covered as to leave a narrow passage, only on one side, scarcely sufficient to admit carriages. It was, however, spacious and commodious, and contained a large apartment, at the farther end of which was a convenient court of justice, where the quarter sessions were held in ro-

tation, till within these few years, by an order of the magistrates, the sessions were transferred to Usk. It was built by the benefaction of 200 marks, left for that purpose, by the last will of Philip Jones, of London and Lanarth court, esq. (ancestor to the Jones's of Lanarth and Clytha) dated 27th Sept. 1602. From W. Dinwoody, esq.

‡ Itin. vol. 5. fol. 7.

*wealthy and thriving, and the very best in the shire *.*" The decline of its importance may be dated from the forfeiture of the charter, in the beginning of the reign of William the third, on account of disaffection to the new government, which occasioned violent dissensions, tumults, and disorders at the election of a bailiff †.

Another cause of its decline was derived from the failure of the trade. Abergavenny was once the chief mart for supplying the midland parts of Wales with shop goods, and various articles of traffic. Since the construction of turnpike roads, and the custom of sending out riders, which prevails among the merchants of London and Bristol, for the purpose of vending their own commodities, this branch of trade has been almost annihilated. The town was likewise enriched by a considerable manufactory of flannel, for which the circumjacent country is well calculated; the sheep of the hills supply a fine species of wool, and the quality of the waters in the vicinity is peculiarly adapted for rendering the flannel soft and delicate. Only a small quantity is now made in the town and neighbourhood, and the manufacture has been principally transferred to Longtown in Montgomeryshire, which, from custom, still retains the name of Abergavenny flannel, although inferior in fineness and softness to the species made in this place. The decay of this manufacture has been attributed to the custom of rolling the pieces, which renders inspection more difficult, and conceals defects, so that the farther end has been occasionally found to be of an inferior quality: on the contrary, the Montgomeryshire flannel is packed in folds, by which the whole of the piece is equally liable to inspection. Perhaps the only method of remedying the bad effects of this custom, would be to adopt regulations, similar to those established by law, for the packing of Irish linen, by which means the credit of the fabric is preserved.

A manufacture of narrow cloth, almost sufficient to supply the inhabitants, has also fallen to decay since the introduction of machinery too expensive for the limited trade of this district. A laudable attempt, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, was made to revive it by two opulent inhabitants. The one sent his son into Gloucestershire, to learn the business of wool-stapling, and a son of

* Hist. of Mon. Appendix, No. V.

† See the act of parliament relating to the free school of Abergavenny, which passed in 1760.

of the other was apprenticed to a clothier at Shepton Mallet. Unfortunately the latter, who was a promising young man, dying in the last year of his apprenticeship, this judicious scheme was defeated.

This place also supplied large quantities of shoes, which were conveyed to Bristol, and exported from thence. Although this trade is considerably diminished, and supposed to be adequate only to the consumption of the neighbourhood, yet the number of shoemakers render it probable that some are even now exported.

During the preposterous fashion formerly prevalent among the beaux, of decorating their heads with flaxen perriwigs of an enormous size, which were valued in proportion to their whiteness, and not unfrequently sold at the price of forty or fifty guineas, a method was discovered, and supposed to be invented in this neighbourhood, of bleaching hair; an employment which supported many persons, and was productive of considerable profit; until the fashion changed.

From this concurrence of unfavourable circumstances, the trade declined, and Abergavenny was hastening to decay; but about forty years ago, a new source of advantage was fortunately opened. The passage through these parts being facilitated by the construction of turnpike roads, the beauties of the situation attracted attention; and physicians of great practice prescribing goats' whey for consumptive persons, Abergavenny became a place of resort. But alas! a fashion prevails in medicine as well as in dress: the flaxen perriwigs fell into disuse, and goats' whey is no longer the panacea of consumptive complaints. Yet numerous invalids still repair every summer to Abergavenny, for the mildness and salubrity of the air, and travellers flock in crowds to enjoy the charming aspect of the surrounding scenery.

But more solid and substantial benefits are expected to flow from the recent establishment of the iron founderies in the neighbouring mountains, which already afford full occupation to the poor in the adjoining parishes. The numbers employed are daily augmenting, the consumption greater and more certain, and the value of lands already increased one fourth. The natives entertain the most sanguine hopes of still greater benefit. The numerous streams which fall

Z

down

down the surrounding heights, are well calculated for water-mills; new establishments may be formed, and the large quantities of bar iron fabricated in the vicinity, which are now exported, may be manufactured into different articles, and sent down the canal, when it is completed, to the ports of the channel.

Abergavenny was noted for the cheapness as well as the excellence of its market; but by the influx of company, and the establishment of the iron-works, the price of provisions has been considerably enhanced, to the chagrin of a few, who have derived no benefit from these advantages. A stranger, expatiating with rapture on the beauty of the views, said to a native who accompanied him, "Really, Mr. Davies, this spot of your's is quite enchanting! you cannot move a step without discovering new beauties; fine prospects are actually *cheap* here." "True, sir," replied Mr. Davies, "and you will find prospects to be the only *cheap* things in the country."

There is a free grammar school at Abergavenny, which was founded by Henry the eighth, and endowed, in trust to the corporation, with the great tythes of the rectory of Bedgeworth in the county of Gloucester, which was a parcel of the monastery of Usk, and of several rectories * which belonged to the priory of Abergavenny, for the maintenance of a master, chosen by the bailiffs and vicar, and of an usher, appointed by the master, with the addition of £.10 annually to "two of the most hopeful and indigent scholars." By a subsequent arrangement, made in the reign and at the recommendation of Charles the second, the great tythes of Bedgeworth were leased, for a term of 99 years, to Jesus college in the university of Oxford, at an annual rent of £.50, on condition of maintaining a fellow and scholar, to be chosen by the bailiffs and vicar out of the free school; and should none be deemed qualified for learning and manners, from the natives of the county of Monmouth. Of this annual sum £.40 was appropriated for the salary of the master, £.10 for the exhibition of the two scholars, and £.15 a year were paid to the usher out of the other rents by the corporation.

* "Of St. Michael de Kilcorney, Llandewy Rotherg, Llanellen, Llanthwy Skredde, and Bringewine, and a portion of tythes of the rectory of Llanwenarth, all in the county of Monmouth, and the diocese of Landaff, &c." Act of parliament, p. 2.

corporation. On the forfeiture of the charter the trust ceased ; but the terms were duly fulfilled by Jesus College, on whom, in conjunction with the vicar, the choice of the master devolved ; the receivers, however, of the other estates which remained in the hands of the corporation, and were valued at £.53 a year, withheld the payment of the rents, excepting the stipend of the usher.

As in consequence of the forfeiture of the charter, all these arrears and rents devolved upon the crown, as well as the reversion of the impropriate rectory of Bedgeworth at the expiration of the lease of ninety-nine years, a joint petition from Jesus college and the town of Abergavenny was presented to the king. Accordingly, in 1760, an act of parliament vested in perpetuity the rectory of Bedgeworth in Jesus college, on the former conditions, and the rents and arrears of the other rectories in trustees, for paying the usher, supporting the school, and employing the surplus for the relief of the poor, and benefit of the town. According to the regulations established by this act of parliament, the master, who must be a fellow, scholar, or member of Jesus college, is chosen by the college and the vicar, if resident ; the fellow and scholar must be either natives of Abergavenny or of the county of Monmouth, who have been at least two years in the grammar school ; they are nominated by the college, are called *the fellow and scholar of Bergavenny*, and bound to vacate their fellowship or scholarship at the end of fourteen years. Visitors are appointed from the college to inspect the school, and to correct abuses ; the vicar is likewise empowered to examine the conduct of the master, and in case of negligence, in conjunction with the bishop of Landaff and the college, to remove him and nominate another.

CHAPTER 18.

Tudor's Gate.—Ruins of Abergavenny Castle.—History, and different Proprietors.

ABERGAVENNY was formerly a fortified place; many parts of the walls are entire, and their site may be traced in the center of the town. The western gate still exists; it is called Tudor's Gate, and is a strong gothic portal, defended by a portcullis, of which the groove is visible. In passing through the arch, the eye catches a perspective view, which is much admired: in the fore ground, the river is seen under the arches of the bridge, gliding along the meads; the house of upper Lanfoist appears bosomed in a rich grove of oaks, and the back ground is formed by the naked, but magnificent swell of the Bloreng. A more pleasing assemblage of picturesque objects never entered into the composition of a landscape; the whole harmonises together, and produces an effect which neither the pen nor the pencil can adequately delineate.

Although the castle is much dilapidated, the site is not difficult to be traced. The ruins are very extensive, and vestiges of the ancient walls are still seen at some distance. The castle consisted of two courts, one of which is converted into a kitchen garden; the gateway or grand entrance still exists, and some part of the walls; but the principal remains are situated on an eminence overlooking the Usk; they consist of a pointed arched doorway, a high round tower, and part of a pentagon tower. To the south-east is a tumulus, environed by a trench, with the foundation of a building on the top; this was probably the keep or citadel. The doorways and windows of which the shapes are visible are pointed or gothic.

The

The great beauty of these remains is derived from their situation on an abrupt rise, overlooking the vale and river of the Uſk : their position, and the range of the adjacent mountains, are well described by Mr. Sotheby :

- “ Here while I wake the reed, beneath the brow
 “ Of the rent Norman tower that overhangs
 “ The lucid Uſk, the enamoured eye purſues
 “ Along the expanſe the undulating line
 “ That nature loves. Whether with gentle bend
 “ She ſlopes the vale, or lifts the gradual hill,
 “ Winds the free rivulet, or down the bank
 “ Spreads the wild wood’s luxuriant growth, or breaks
 “ With interrupting heights the even bound
 “ Of the outſtretched horizon. Far and wide,
 “ Blackening the plain beneath, proud Blorech lowers.
 “ Behind whoſe level length the weſtern ſun
 “ Dims his ſlope beam : there the oppoſed mount
 “ Eaſtern of craggy Skirrid, ſacred ſoil,
 “ Oft trod by pilgrim foot. O’er the ſmooth ſwell
 “ Of Derry, glide the clouds that gathering hang
 “ Round yon ſteep brow*, amid the varied ſcene
 “ Towering aloft. As gradual up the height
 “ Of the rough hills, aſcending Ceres leads
 “ The patient ſtep of labour, the wide heath,
 “ Where once the nibbling flock ſcant herbage cropt,
 “ Wave in the breeze, with golden harveſts crown’d.”

According to tradition, the caſtle of Abergavenny was conſtructed before the conqueſt, by a giant called Agros, which report ſufficiently ſhews its antiquity, and renders it probable, that the Britons had erected a fortrefs at this place ; for the beſt critics in the Britiſh language admit, that the ancient word Gawr, which is uſually tranſlated a giant, ſignified alſo a prince†. The character of the ruins,

however,

* The Sugar Loaf.

† Cambrian Regiſter, vol. 1. p. 350.

however, seems to indicate, that no remains of the British fortress exist, and that the present structure was raised in the Norman æra; history confirms this conjecture.

Soon after the conquest, Hameline, son of Dru de Baladun or Balun, one of the great Norman chieftains, subdued Overwent, and built a fortress at Abergavenny; dying without issue, in 1090, he left the castle to his nephew Brien de in Wallingford or de l' Isle. Brien, having two sons, who were lepers, placed them in the priory of Abergavenny, and going to Jerusalem, surrendered the territory and castle to his nephew Walter de Gloucester, earl of Hereford and constable of England. It was inherited by Milo, son of Walter, whose sons dying without issue, his vast possessions were divided among his three daughters. Berta brought to her husband, Philip de Braose, a powerful baron, the castle, together with all the lands of Brecknock and Overwent, from whom they descended to their son William de Braose.

At this period, the castle was surprised by Sitfylt ap Dyfnwald and other Welsh chieftains, and the whole garrison taken prisoners. From them William received it by composition; but suspicious of their intentions, he basely murdered Sitfylt, his son Geoffrey, and other chieftains of Gwent, whom he invited to a feast in the castle. If we may credit the account of the Welsh chronicles, he afterwards repaired to Sitfylt's house, and slew the other son, Cadwallader, in his mother's presence *. This barbarous act was amply revenged on himself, his wife, and family. Having incurred the resentment of king John, he, his wife Maud, and their son William, were arrested: according to Matthew of Westminster, his wife and son were famished at Windsor; William, after escaping abroad in the habit of a beggar, wandered as a fugitive from place to place, and dying at Paris, in 1212, was interred in the abbey of St. Victor.

His son Reginald obtained possession of Abergavenny, and of the other castles which belonged to his father, and dying in 1222, transmitted them to William his son, whose end was no less tragical than that of his grandfather. "Being suspected," as Dugdale says, "of over much familiarity with the wife of Leweline

* Powell's History of Wales, p. 200.

line, prince of Wales (sister to king Henry) he was, by him, subtilly invited to an Easter feast, but after the entertainment was over, was charged therewith by Leweline, and cast into prison, where he suffered death by barbarous murder. Some say he was hanged, and the wife of Leweline with him." William leaving no issue male, his great property was divided among his four daughters; of whom Eve conveyed the honour and lands of Abergavenny as her dower, to her husband William de Cantilupe. Their son George dying, in 1272, without issue, was succeeded in the barony by his nephew John de Hastings, who held this castle by homage, ward, and marriage; covenanting, in case of war between the king of England and prince of Wales, to defend the country of Overwent "at his own charge, to the utmost of his power, and for the good of himself, the king, and kingdom*."

John de Hastings is represented, in an heraldic poem, as the mirror of chivalry, blending courtesy with deeds of arms; as bold and impetuous in the battle, as gentle and debonnaire in time of peace, and executing justice with wisdom and impartiality. He had a light and strong shield, and a banner with emblazoned arms, or a manche gules †. Having espoused Isabel, daughter of William, sister and at length coheir to Adomere de Valence, earl of Pembroke, his grandson Laurence, became earl of Pembroke, as well as lord of Abergavenny.

John, son of Laurence, being made lieutenant of Aquitain, was attacked and taken prisoner by the Spaniards (1372). After a confinement of four years in Spain, "with most inhumane usage," he was at length released, under condition of paying an exorbitant ransom, but died in his journey to Calais, in the 30th year of his age. With the king's license he entailed, in failure of heirs male, the castle and lordship of Bergavenny, and other lands in England and Wales, on his cousin sir William Beauchamp, fourth son of Thomas earl of Warwick, by Katherine, daughter of Roger lord Mortimer. This disposition took effect on the death of his son John, who was slain at a tournament in the 17th year of his age (1389.)

Sir William Beauchamp, who on the untimely death of John succeeded to the barony

* Camden's Britannia, vol. 2. p. 716. † Antiquarian Repertory, vol. 2. p. 137.

barony of Bergavenny, distinguished himself by his military prowess in several campaigns, under John of Gaunt duke of Lancaster, and in reward for his services was intrusted with the important command of Calais. In this situation, he gave a proof of manly firmness and high integrity: the duke of Gloucester, aided by a powerful confederacy of the barons, having taken up arms for the purpose of compelling Richard the second to dismiss his favourites, the king formed the design of retiring into France, and purchasing the assistance of Charles the sixth, by the surrender of the principal fortresses possessed by the English in that realm. Apprehensive lest the inflexible integrity of sir William Beauchamp should impede his design, Richard ordered him to relinquish the command of Calais, and transmit certain letters to the court of France; in reply to this order, he declared, "that he would not resign in a private and unauthorised manner, that charge and trust which he had received publicly from the king, in the presence and with the consent of his nobles." At the same time he transmitted the letters to the duke of Gloucester in England. He afterwards arrested John de la Pole, brother of the earl of Suffolk, the royal minion, who was sent to supersede him as captain of Calais, and conveyed him a prisoner to England. For this bold measure, which totally disconcerted the king's designs, he was committed to prison, but soon released; and being again restored to his honours and estates, was, on the 23d of November 1392, first summoned to parliament as baron Bergavenny. He was highly favoured by Henry the fourth, who made him a knight of the garter, and appointed him justice of South Wales for life. He died in 1411, after settling, by a special entail, the castle and lordship of Abergavenny, in failure of his issue male, on his brother Thomas earl of Warwick, and his heirs male.

He was succeeded in the lordship of Abergavenny by his son Richard, who emulating his father's actions, was, for his military services, advanced by Henry the fifth to the earldom of Worcester, and obtained large grants of lands in Normandy. He did not long enjoy these marks of royal favour; for he fell a victim to his military ardour, being mortally wounded in his side by a stone from a sling. He died in 1420, leaving, by his wife Isabel, sister and heir of Richard le Despenser,

spenser, an only daughter, Elisabeth, who married sir Edward Nevill, fourth son of Ralph earl of Westmoreland, to whom she conveyed all her father's possessions, excepting the castle and lordship of Abergavenny, which by the special entail descended to Richard, eldest son and heir of Thomas earl of Warwick.

Richard earl of Warwick, who thus became baron of Abergavenny, was one of the most puissant and valorous nobles of his age, and by his feats in arms almost realised the fabulous adventures of Guy earl of Warwick, his renowned ancestor. He signalised himself at a very early age in suppressing the rebellion of Owen Glendower, whose standard he took in open combat, and gained great honour at the memorable battle of Shrewsbury. Without recounting the numerous instances of his military skill and heroic intrepidity, which greatly contributed to the success of the English arms in France; it will be sufficient to observe, that he was the friend and companion in arms of Henry the fifth, who gratefully rewarded his services by repeated marks of favour, and gave the highest testimony of his respect, by appointing him guardian to his infant son.

He was no less distinguished by foreign princes than by his own sovereign; being deputed, with a retinue of 800 horse, to accompany the English prelates to the general council of Constance, he received uncommon marks of approbation from the emperor Sigismund and his consort. Having signalised himself at a tournament, the empress took his badge from the shoulder of one of his knights, and placed it on her own. The emperor also, on his arrival in England, said to Henry the fifth, "No christian prince has such a knight, for wisdom, nurture, and manhood; and if all courtesy was lost on earth, it might yet be found again in him:" hence he was denominated "the *father of courtesy*."

He was not only the most distinguished warrior, but the greatest traveller of his age. After visiting France and Italy, he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and was received at Jerusalem with the highest marks of respect, as well for his own valour, as for his descent from Guy earl of Warwick, whose romantic history was adapted to the genius of the east. From Jerusalem he returned to Venice, and continued his travels through Russia, Lithuania, Poland, Prussia, and Germany. During this expedition, he performed extraordinary feats of chivalry

in divers tournaments, in which he surpassed all his contemporaries. But he even surpassed himself in a tournament which he held near Calais in 1416. An account of this singular adventure is related by Dugdale from an ancient manuscript with such spirit and simplicity, that it cannot be abridged without injury to the narrative *. He died at Rouen in Normandy in 1439, bearing the high office of regent of France.

Henry his son by his second wife Isabel, widow of Richard de Beauchamp earl of Worcester, gave proofs of early prowess. In consideration of his services in defence of the duchy of Aquitain, before he had accomplished the age of nineteen,

* "Whereupon he soon hasted to Calais, and the more speedily, because he heard, that the French were raising great forces against that place; but when he understood, that those forces bent another way, he resolved to put in practice some new point of chevalry, causing three shields to be made, and in each of them a lady painted; the first harping at the end of a bedstead, with a grate of gold on her left sleeve, and her knight called the *green knight*, with a black quarter, who was ready to joust with any knight of France twelve courses; having two shields of purveyance, and his letter sealed with the seal of his arms, the *field silver, a manch, gules*; the second pavis or shield, had a lady sitting at a covered board working pearls, and on her sleeve a glove of plate tacked, her knight being called chevalier Vert, having his letter sealed with these arms, the *field silver, two bars of gules*, who was to joust fifteen courses, and that should be saddles of chains; the third pavis had a lady sitting in a garden making a chaplet, and on her sleeve a polein with a rivet, her knight being called *chevalier attendant*, who with his fellow must run and course with sharp spears, his letter being sealed with *gold and gules quarterly, and a border vert*; which letters were sent to the king's court of France, where three French knights received them, and promised their fellows to meet at a day and place assigned: whereupon the first was a knight called sir Gerard Herbaumes, who called himself *le chevalier rouge*; the second a famous knight, called sir Hugh Launey, calling himself *le chevalier Blanke*; and the third a knight named sir Collard Fines. Twelfthday in Christmas being appointed for the time, that they should meet in a land called the Park hedge of Gynes.

"On which day, this earl came into the field with

his face covered, a plume of ostrich feathers upon his helm, and his horse trapped with the lord Toney's arms, (one of his ancestors) viz. *argent a manch gules*, where first encountering with the *chevalier Rouge*, at the third course he unhorsed him, and so returned with close vizor unknown to his pavilion, whence he sent to that knight a good courser.

"The next day he came into the field with his vizor close, a chaplet on his helm, and a plume of ostrich feathers aloft, his horse trapped with the arms of Hanlap, viz. *silver two bars gules*, where he met with the *blank knight*, with whom he encountered, smote off his vizor thrice, broke his besagues, and other harneys, and returned victoriously to his pavilion with all his own habiliments safe, and as yet not known to any; from whence he sent this *blank knight*, sir Hugh Launey, a good courser.

"But the morrow after, being the last day of the jousts he came with his face open, and his helmet as the day before, save that the chaplet was rich with pearl and precious stones, and in his coat of arms of Guy and Beauchamp quarterly; having the arms of Toney and Hanlap on his trappers, and said that as he had in his own person performed the service the two days before, so with God's grace he would the third. Whereupon encountering with sir Collard Fines, at every stroke he bore him backward to his horse, in so much, as the Frenchmen saying, that he himself was bound to his saddle; he alighted and presently got up again. But all being ended, he returned to his pavilion, sent to sir Collard Fines a fair courser, feasted all the people, gave to those three knights great rewards, and so rode to Calais with great honour."

Dugdale's Baronage, vol. 1. p. 244.

nineteen, he was created by Henry the sixth " premier earl of England, and for " a distinction between him and other earls, the king granted to him and the " heirs male of his body, leave to wear a golden coronet, as well in his own presence, as elsewhere, upon such great festivals as the like used to be worn." He also conferred on him the title of duke of Warwick, declared him king of the Isle of Wight, and placed the crown on his head with his own hands*. He lived only to receive these mighty honours; for he died in 1445, in the twenty-second year of his age, leaving an infant daughter, Anne, who became ward to the crown, and died in her infancy.

On the death of the duke of Warwick, sir Edward Nevill, by petition to the throne, obtained the barony, and had livery of the castle in right of his wife Elisabeth, sole daughter of Richard Beauchamp earl of Worcester. But although he thus obtained livery of the castle, and both he and his descendants were summoned to parliament under the title of barons of Bergavenny, yet he never acquired possession; he was excluded by Richard Nevill, son of the earl of Salisbury, who, in virtue of his marriage with Anne, sister of the late duke, obtained the earldom of Warwick, and together with his other possessions, the castle of Abergavenny; all opposition being ineffectual to the will of the *great king maker*.

Warwick being slain at the battle of Barnet field, the chief part of his possessions ought to have reverted to his widow, as heirs of the house of Beauchamp; but they were settled by act of parliament on her two daughters, Isabel, who espoused George duke of Clarence, and Anne, the wife of Richard duke of Gloucester. Accordingly the castle was retained by the duke of Clarence; and on his attainder by the duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard the third. After the death of Richard, the unfortunate widow of Warwick, who had suffered extreme poverty, was restored to her inheritance by another act of parliament: but this restoration was a mere formality; for she was no sooner reinstated, than she was compelled to surrender them by a deed of enfeoffment to Henry the seventh. Dugdale has enumerated the possessions which she thus yielded to the crown,

A a 2

to

* Leland's Itin. vol. 6. p. 91.

to the detriment of her grandson, the unfortunate earl of Warwick, who was imprisoned in the tower, and afterwards beheaded for a supposed conspiracy.

The castle, thus wrested from the house of Warwick, and detained from the Nevills, was, with many other possessions, granted * by Henry the seventh, to his uncle Jasper de Hatfield, earl of Pembroke, who had greatly contributed to raise him to the throne, and was recently created duke of Bedford.

On his death, in 1495, without issue, the castle reverted to the crown; but in the reign of Henry the eighth was restored to George, grandson of sir Edward Nevill, upon a petition of right presented to the king †.

Henry, the son of George, dying in 1586, leaving an only daughter, Mary, married to sir Thomas Fane, knight, the castle of Abergavenny, in virtue of the entail, descended to his brother, sir Edward Nevill; but the barony was claimed by both parties, and the dispute was not decided until 1605. After a pleading of seven days, the house of peers declared, that each of the claimants seemed, in respect of descent, worthy of the dignity; and as the baronies of Abergavenny and le Despencer, belonged hereditarily to the family, requested the king to honour both parties with the title of baron; to which he agreed.

The lord chancellor proposing to the peers, whether the heir male or female should enjoy the title of Abergavenny, the majority voted for the heir male; he then proposed, that the title of baron le Despencer should be conferred on the female and her heirs; they unanimously assented. Accordingly, Edward was summoned to parliament by the king's writ, under the title of baron Abergavenny, and being introduced, was placed above the baron de Audeley. At the same time the king's letters patent were read, restoring the barony of le
Despencer

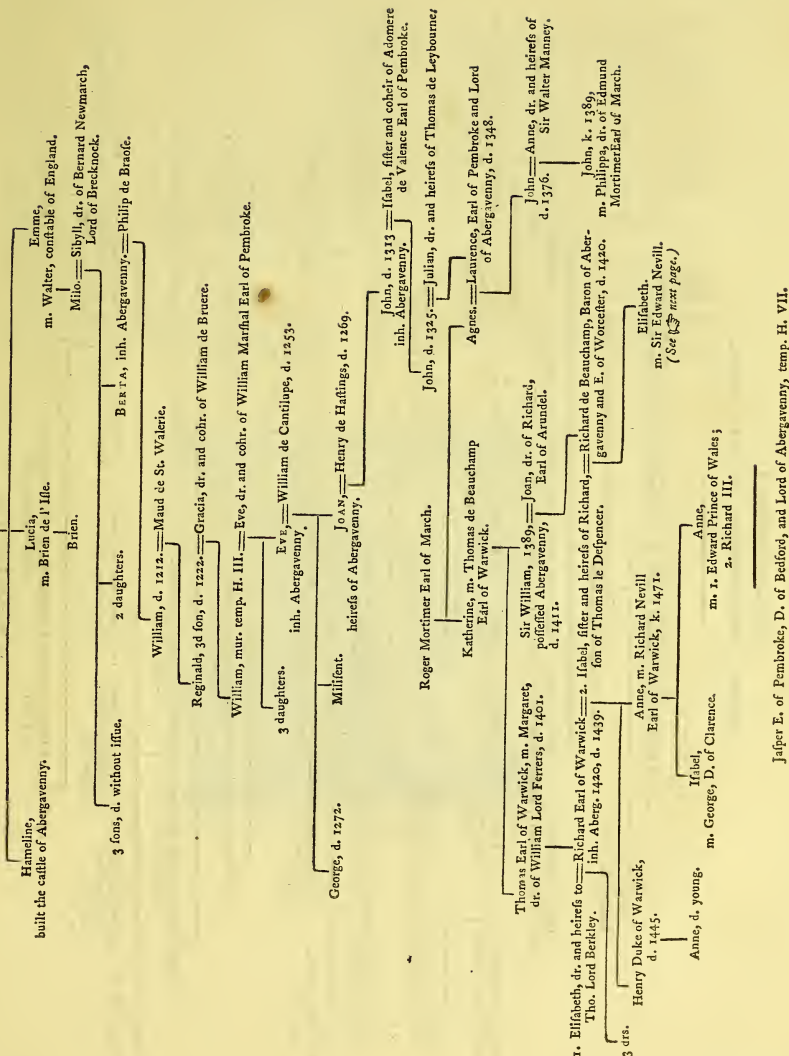
* It appears from the docket of a grant, in the Heralds' Office, book W Q, fol. 25, from Henry the seventh, in the third year of his reign, that the said king "gave and granted to Jasper duke of Bedford the castle, with all the lands, members, and appurtenances of Burgavenny, otherwise called Abergavenny.

† It declared "how Richard Nevill earl of Warwick had wrongfully disseised sir Edward Nevill "lord of Bergavenny his grandfather; and how by "that disseison, the said castle and lordship had been,

"by the heirs of the said earl, wrongfully withholden
"and detained from the right heirs of the foresaid
"sir William Beauchamp, lord of Bergavenny, that
"first made the entail; which heirs, notwithstanding
"the want of possession of the said castle and lordship
"in all this mean time, have always been summoned
"and called to the parliaments holden in their dayes,
"as lords and barons of Bergavenny, and for such
"have been esteemed, reputed, and taken, during
"their lives."

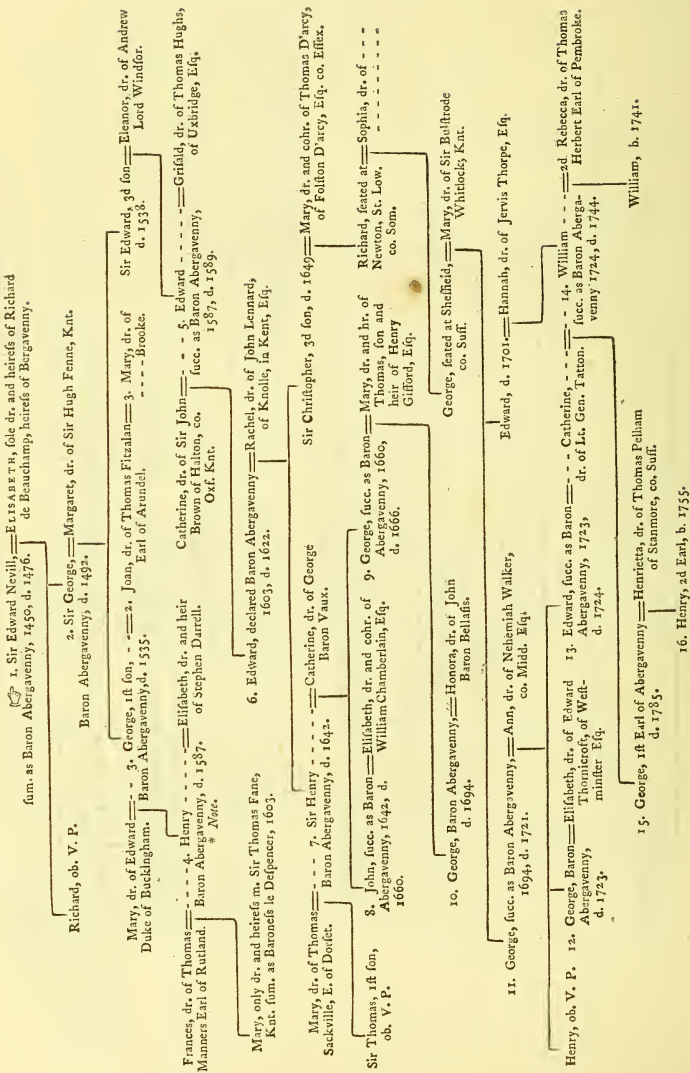
Collins's Baronies by Writ, p. 178—79.

DRU DE BALUN, or BALADUN.



(To face p. 180.)

BARONS OF ABERGAVENNY, OF THE LINE OF NEVILL.



* The reader is desired to correct two errors in the text, p. 180. Henry, who was the *grandson*, is called the *son* of George; and Sir Edward Nevill was the *cousin*, not the *brother*, of Henry.

Despenser to Mary Fane and her heirs. But on the question of precedence, the peers referred to the commissioners for the office of earl marshal of England, who decided in favour of le Despenser *.

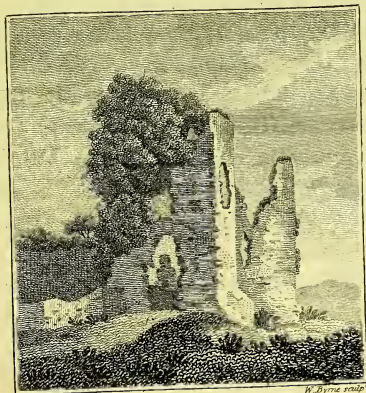
The lineal descendants of sir Edward Nevill have since continued in possession of the castle and barony. In 1784, George, the fifteenth lord of this line, was created viscount Nevill and earl of Abergavenny; on whose death, his titles and estates, together with the castle, descended to Henry, the present earl.

The title of Abergavenny is the only one remaining of those numerous baronies conferred by the kings on the great Norman chieftains who conquered Wales, and like the earldom of Arundel, is a feudal honour or local dignity, by inheritance and possession of the castle, without any other creation †.

* Camden's Britannia, vol. 1. p. 716.

† For the contents of this chapter, have been principally consulted, Powell's History of Wales; Dugdale's Monasticon; Dugdale's Baronage, art. Bala-

dun or Balun, de l' Isle, Braose, Cantilupe, Hastings, Beauchamp, Nevill; Collins's Peerage; Edmonson's Historical Account of the Greville family; Edmonson's Baronagium; Collins's Baronies by Writ.



W. Byrne sculp.

ABERGAVENNY CASTLE.

Published March 1860 by Cadell & Davies, Strand.

CHAPTER 19.

Ancient Parish Church.—Priory.—St. Mary's Church.—Herbert Chapel.—Monuments.—Sir William ap Thomas.—Sir Richard Herbert of Coldbrook.—Sir Richard Herbert of Ewias.—Other Sepulchral Memorials.—Epitaph on the Roberts Family.

BEFORE the dissolution Abergavenny contained two churches; one dedicated to St. John was the parish church, and the other was the chapel of the priory. At the dissolution the former was appropriated by Henry the eighth to the free school which he then endowed; being in a state of decay, it was taken down about fifty years ago, and rebuilt in its present form, with a handsome embattled tower, which gives it the appearance of a religious edifice.

An alien priory of Benedictine monks, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, was founded at Abergavenny, by Hameline Balun*, or Baladun, in the latter end of the reign of William the conqueror, or the beginning of William Rufus. One of his posterity, William de Braose, in the reign of king John, "gave the tithes of his castle, viz. of bread, wine, beer, cyder, all manner of flesh, fish, salt, honey, wax, tallow, and in general whatsoever should be brought thither and spent there, upon condition that the abbot and convent of St. Vincent's in Mans, (to which this priory was a cell) should daily pray for the soul of king Henry the first, as also for the soul of him the said William, and the soul of Maud his wife †."

At

* Speed erroneously attributes the foundation of this priory to John de Hastings, who only confirmed the grants of his predecessors.

† Dugdale, vol. i. p. 418. Monast. vol. i. p. 556. Tanner art. Monmouthshire.

At the dissolution it contained a prior and four monks, whose revenues amounted to £. 129. 5s. 8d. according to Dugdale, and £. 59. 4s. according to Speed. At that period, William Marley was prior, and received a pension of £. 9. Thomas Astley and Thomas Martin, two of the friars, subscribed to the supremacy, 12th September 1534*. Neither Speed, Dugdale, or Tanner mention to whom the site was granted. It was long the property of the Gunter family, but I cannot ascertain at what period or by what means it came into their possession. The last possessor of this name was James Gunter, who represented the county of Monmouth, and in 1712 died suddenly in the House of Commons. His daughter and heiress Mary, conveyed it to her husband George Milborne of Wonaflow. Their son Charles having no issue male, it was inherited by his daughter Mary, who espoused Thomas Swinnerton of Butterton hall, in the county of Stafford, esq; and died in 1795, leaving issue three daughters †.

The estate is still very considerable; but the demesnes of the priory were originally of greater extent. Besides a wood, named Coed y Prior, stretching under the Bloreng, which still belongs to Mr. Swinnerton; a farm, now called Chapel Farm, at the foot of the Derry, and a park occupying part of the Derry and Rolben, and reaching to the bottom of the Sugar Loaf, were once the property of the priory. There are also some pieces of ground, still called the Priory Meads, and Monk's field, part of the ancient manor of Monk's town, which were purchased by counsellor Roberts of Abergavenny, from Mr. Francis Lewis of Landewi Rytherch, to whose ancestors they were probably granted by Henry the eighth. The great tythes, likewise, of several rectories in Monmouthshire, were parcels of this priory, and at the dissolution appropriated to the maintenance of the grammar school‡.

Some remains of the priory still exist; they are joined to the nave of the church, and have been converted into a modern house, which was the residence of the respectable families of Gunter and Milborne, but is now untenanted.

The

* Willis's History of Mitred Abbies, vol. 2. p. 242. † See the chapter on Wonaflow. ‡ See chapter 17.

The ancient chapel of the priory is now the parish church; it seems to have been originally built in the shape of a cathedral, but has undergone many alterations, and consists of a nave and north aisle, part of a transept with a tower in the middle, a choir, with two aisles, and a chancel. The windows and arches are all gothic, but in the transept are the remains of a circular arch, now filled up, which has the appearance of Norman architecture. The length from east to west is 172 feet, the breadth of the nave and north aisle 45, and of the choir and two side aisles 67. The nave is separated from the north aisle by three gothic arches of different heights and breadths, and an opening of an oblong shape with a flat roof, which has a singular and heterogeneous appearance*.

The choir retains its original state, with stalls on each side, of oak coarsely carved; the seat of the prior is surmounted with a mitre; but from what cause this distinction was derived I could not ascertain†.

In this church are many ancient and curious monuments; part of the south aisle of the choir is called the Herbert chapel, because it was the cemetery of several branches of that illustrious family seated in the vicinity; it likewise contains monuments of other memorable personages, who were lords of Abergavenny. All the accounts of these sepulchral memorials which have fallen under my observation, are extremely scanty and inaccurate, except a curious description from an old manuscript printed in Gough's edition of Camden, and that of the rhyming poetaster ‡ whom I have often quoted, and found a better *Cicerone* than all the successive writers on Monmouthshire, who have done nothing more than transcribe passages from Gough.

On

* The spring of the middle arch is 25 feet 10 inches, the height 24 feet 4 inches. The spring of the smallest arch is only 8 feet 6 inches, and the height 15 feet. The height of the oblong opening 25 feet 4 inches, and the breadth 9 feet 7 inches. The pillars are of equal height, the shafts measuring 10 feet.

† The abbey of St. Vincent's in Mans was a mitred abbey; but that circumstance did not confer the

privilege on any of its cells to assume the mitre. It probably arose from some special grant to the prior of Abergavenny; such grants were not unusual; for there were mitred priors as well as mitred abbots, though the former did not, perhaps, sit in parliament.

‡ Churchyard. Worthines of Wales, p. 55.—62.

On the south side, in a recess of the wall, ornamented with gothic niches, is a rude figure in stone, of a knight cross legged, clad in a coat of mail, a helmet on his head, the left hand on his breast, the right clasping the hilt of his sword. His feet repose on a greyhound, from which an absurd legend has been invented, and the old sexton never fails to relate the story: the knight returning home saw a cradle, in which was his infant son, overturned, the child covered with gore, and a greyhound standing by with his mouth bloody. Convinced that the dog had worried the child, he killed it on the spot, but soon discovered that the faithful animal had saved the infant by destroying a serpent which attacked it, and that the gore was the blood of the serpent; in memory of his regret and gratitude, he caused the figure of the dog to be placed on his tomb. The person here buried is unknown, but supposed to have been a stranger, and a knight templar. The account of his arms, which are now defaced, given by Churchyard, might lead one more versed in heraldry than myself to discover his family *.

On the north side of the second arch of the choir, lies a recumbent effigies in freestone, of a man with his hands uplifted in a short coat of mail; on his head is a helmet, on the left arm a shield, a long sword on the same side, on his right a dagger, and at his feet a bull; the figure is seven feet in length. From the image of the bull a legend, no less absurd than that of the greyhound, has been invented, and is thus related in the rude style of Churchyard:

“ His force was much, for he by strength,

“ With bull did struggle so,

“ He broke cleane off his hornes at length,

“ And therewith let him go.”

The person here buried, was probably sir Edward Nevill, who became baron of Abergavenny in right of his wife Elisabeth, daughter of Richard de Beauchamp.

In

* “ Three golden lions gay,

“ Nine flower deluces there likewise

“ His armes doth full display.”

Worthines of Wales, p. 55.

In the middle of the chapel is a monument, richly carved in alabaster, of sir William ap Thomas, and his wife Gladys, the parents of William Herbert first earl of Pembroke, of that name, and of sir Richard Herbert of Coldbrook. Their effigies lie in a recumbent posture on the top of the sepulchre: he is habited in a complete suit of armour, with a dagger hanging from a rich belt; his head repofes on the bust of a blackamoor, which was his crest, and is still borne by some branches of the family*; his feet rest on a lion. His wife is dressed in a close garment covered with a loose robe, and repofes on a cushion, supported by two small figures, much dilapidated, but which appear to have been angels; at her feet are two dogs. On each side of the tomb are twelve small whole length alabaster figures in relievo, holding scrolls; those on the south side are said to represent the twelve apostles, those on the north are probably martyrs; one has a sword hanging from his girdle. At the eastern end is a larger compartment, much broken, containing the salutation of the Virgin Mary, with an angel on each side.

Sir William was son of Thomas ap Gwillim, buried at Lanfanfraed, by Maud, daughter of sir John Morley, from whom he inherited the castle of Raglan. He is principally known as the father of William Herbert earl of Pembroke, and of sir Richard Herbert of Coldbrook; but he was a man of distinguished valour, and in 1415 was created knight banneret † for his military achievements. Gladys his wife was daughter of sir David Gam, and widow of sir Roger Vaughan, both of whom fell in defending the person of Henry the fifth at the memorable battle of Agincourt, and were knighted as they lay extended on the field of battle in the agonies of death ‡.

The ashes of sir Richard Herbert of Coldbrook, and of his wife Margaret, daughter of sir Thomas ap Griffith §, knight, repose beneath an alabaster monument, under the furthest arch between the chapel and the choir. Their figures are recumbent, with uplifted hands; he is represented in a suit of mail with his head bare,

and

* Jones's of Lanarth, and the Powells of Perthŵr. Some suppose it to be a friar's head with a wreath.

† Edmonson's *Baronagium Genealogicum*, p. 263.

‡ Powell's *History of Wales*, p. 323. See also chapter 30.

§ See an interesting account of sir Thomas ap Griffith in the *Cambrian Register*, vol. 1.



Burrell sc

MONUMENTAL EFFIGIES of S^r W^m AP THOMAS

Pub^d July 7. 1800. by Cadell 6 Davies Strand

and supported by a sheaf of arrows, which was his crest ; his feet rest on a lion. His lady is habited in a long robe, her head reposes on a cushion, supported by two figures much broken, probably angels, and her feet rest on two dogs. The sides of the sepulchre are decorated with small figures in relievo holding escutcheons ; but the whole is so defaced, that scarcely any of the images can be ascertained, except those of St. George and the dragon, and of the virgin and child.

Sir Richard was the proprietor of Coldbrook house near Abergavenny, and as he principally resided there, was distinguished by the appellation of sir Richard Herbert of Coldbrook. He was a man of uncommon height and prowess, and in the days when heavy armour was worn, and personal strength an object of high consideration, greatly signalised himself in feats of arms. During the civil wars between the houses of York and Lancaster he adhered to the white rose, and assisted in raising Edward the fourth to the throne. He followed the standard of his brother the earl of Pembroke to the battle of Banbury, and displayed such striking instances of courage and force, as are scarcely to be equalled in the annals of chivalry. The curious circumstances which preceded and accompanied his capture and death, are related by his noble descendant lord Herbert of Cherbury.

“ The earl of Pembroke having with his brother sir Richard Herbert apprehended seven brothers in Anglesey, who had committed many murders, commanded them to be hanged. The mother entreating him to pardon two or at least one of her sons, assuring him that the rest were enough to satisfy justice as examples, her request was seconded by sir Richard Herbert ; but the earl finding them all guilty, said that he would make no distinction between them, and ordered them all to be executed ; at which the mother was so aggrieved, that with a pair of wooden beads at her arms, she on her knees curst him, praying that God’s mischief might fall in the first battle that he should make.

“ The earl of Pembroke having arranged his men in order of battle, found

“ his brother sir Richard Herbert standing at the head of his troops, leaning upon his pole-ax in a sad and penfive manner; whereupon the earle said, what doth thy great body, for he was higher by the head * than any one in the army, apprehend any thing, that thou art so melancholy, or art thou weary with marching, that thou dost lean upon thy pole-ax? Sir Richard Herbert replied, that he was neither of both, whereof he should see the proof presently, only I cannot but apprehend on your part, lest the curse of the woman with wooden beads fall upon you.” His actions in this memorable combat did not belie his words, for with his pole-ax he passed and returned twice through the enemy’s army, killing with his own hand 140 men; which according to the noble biographer, is “ more than is famed of Amadis de Gaul, or the knight of the Sun †.”

The valorous efforts of this puissant knight and his associates were on the point of obtaining the victory, when the Welsh troops, mistaking a small corps of the enemy for the advanced guard of the Lancastrian army under the earl of Warwick, were seized with a panic, and fled on all sides. Those who bravely remained on the field of battle were either killed or taken prisoners; among the latter was sir Richard Herbert, who with his brother the earl of Pembroke was led in triumph to Banbury, and sentenced to death on the following day. “ Much lamentation, and no less entreaty were made to save his life, both for his goodly personage, and for the noble chivalry which he had displayed in the field of battle;” but all entreaties were ineffectual, the sentence was carried into execution, and sir Richard Herbert suffered death with spirit and resignation.

Some persons mistake the tomb of sir Richard Herbert for that of his brother; and others suppose that the earl of Pembroke was also buried in this church in some other place. It is certain that in his will dated the day of his death, he ordered his body to be interred in the priory of Abergavenny, between the tomb of his father and the chancel; yet notwithstanding this positive injunction, he appears to have been buried in Tintern abbey ‡.

The

* “ Medio dux agmine Turnus

“ Vertitur arma tenens, ET TOTO VERTICE SUPRA EST.”

Æneis, lib. 9. v. 29.

† Life of lord Herbert of Cherbury, p. 7.—9.

‡ See his will in Dugdale’s Baronage, vol. 3. p. 257.



Engraved

MONUMENTAL EFFIGIES of SIR RICH^d HERBERT

From a drawing by G. Kneller & J. Kneller

The richest monument in the church is that of sir Richard Herbert of Ewias, son of William first earl of Pembroke, and ancestor of the earls of Pembroke and Caernarvon. It is placed in a recess of the south wall: the effigies is recumbent, with uplifted hands, habited in a coat of mail; the head uncovered reposes on a helmet, and the feet rest on a lion. Above are the Herbert arms, per pale azure and gules, three lions rampant argent, a battoon over, impaled with azure, three boars heads, between eight crofs crofflets argent, the arms of his wife Margaret, who was the daughter of sir Matthew Cradock, knight, of Swansey, Glamorganshire. At the back of the monument are several small figures carved in alabaster; the largest of which is that of a woman ascending to heaven, supported by an angel under her feet, and several others hovering about her; a man in armour and a woman are kneeling below. This figure is usually supposed to be the lady of sir Richard Herbert, but certainly represents the ascension of the Virgin Mary. The kneeling figures are those of sir Richard Herbert and his lady; on each side are their three sons in armour, and a daughter kneeling; over are escutcheons charged with the Herbert and Cradock arms. A long and narrow slip of brass, containing an inscription, was fixed on the edge of the monument; part of the brass remains, part is fallen, but the marks on the stones are yet visible:

“ HIC JACET RICHARDUS HERBERT DE EWYAS, MILES, QUI OBIIT
 “ NONO DIE * * * * ANNO REGNI REGIS HENRICI OCTAVI, SECUNDO;
 “ CUJUS ANIMÆ PROPITIETUR JESU. AMEN.”

Although this chapel was the burial place of the Herbert family seated at Coldbrook, yet it does not contain any other memorial, excepting a flat sepulchral stone between the monuments of sir William ap Thomas, and sir Richard Herbert. The inscription commemorates the last male of the Coldbrook branch, and is here inserted, because it ascertains the exact situation of the two above-mentioned monuments, and tends to illustrate the genealogy of the family.

HERE

" HERE LIETH THE BODY OF SIR JAMES
 " HERBERT OF COLDBROOK, KNT.
 " WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE Y^{6TH}
 " DAY OF JUNE 1709, IN THE 65 YEAR
 " OF HIS AGE; HAVING IN HIS
 " LIFE-TIME ENJOYED IN HIS NATIVE
 " COUNTRY ALL THE CHIEF HONOURS
 " DUE TO HIS BERTH AND QUALLITY AS MEMBER
 " OF PARLIAMENT, ETC. AS THEY WERE ENJOYED
 " BY HIS ANCESTORS EVER SINCE THE REIGN
 " OF KING HENRY THE FIRST, HE BEING THE
 " NINETEENTH IN DECENT FROM HERBERT
 " LORD CHAMBERLAIN TO THE SAID KING,
 " AND THE NINTH FROM SIR RICHARD HERBERT
 " OF COLDBROOK, INTERRD UNDER THE TOMB
 " ON HIS LEFT SIDE, WHO WITH HIS BROTHER
 " WILLIAM FIRST EARL OF PEMBROKE OF THAT
 " NAME, WAS (VALIANTLY FIGHTING * * * * *
 " KING EDWARD THE FOURTH IN THAT
 " GREAT QUARREL BETWEEN THE HOUSES OF YORK
 " AND LANCASTER) TAKEN PRISONER * * * * *
 " BANBURY, AND BEHEADED AT NORTHAMPTON
 " IN THE YEAR 1469; BOTH THE SAID BROTHERS
 " BEING SONS OF SIR WILLIAM THOMAS AND
 " GLADICE DE GAM, WHO ARE INTERRED UNDER
 " THE MIDLE TOMB, Y^E SAID SIR JAMES
 " HERBRRT LEVEING BEHIND HIM LADY JUDITH
 " HERBERT, WHO DECEASED THE 12TH DAY
 " OF NOVEMBER THE SAME YEAR. THEY
 " LEFT BEHIND THEM ONE DAUGHTER HIS
 " SOLE HEIR, NAMED JUDITH, MARRIED
 " TO SIR THOMAS POWELL, OF BROADWAY
 " IN Y^E COUNTY OF CARMARTHEN, BARONET,
 " TO WHOM SHE HATH BORN SEVERAL SONS
 " AND DAUGHTERS. HERE ALSO LYETH THE BODY
 " OF SIR JAMES POWELL, FIFTH SON OF Y^E SAID SIR THO^S
 " POWELL, GRANSON OF Y^E SAID SIR JAMES
 " HERBERT, WHO DIED AN INFANT Y^E 11TH
 " DAY OF APRIL 1709.

At the north-eastern corner next the chancel, is the tomb of fir Andrew Powell and his lady. Their effigies in stone are recumbent, and habited as a monk and nun. He was a collateral branch of the great Herbert family, and

his wife was a Herbert; he was an English judge, and lord lieutenant of the counties of Hereford, Monmouth and Brecknock.

Under the first arch between the chapel and choir, is a monument of stone, with two figures in relievo, of a man and woman kneeling on each side of an altar; with a Latin inscription,

“ Hic in Christo quiescens Gulielmus Bakerus, ar. Irenarchia justitiæ vindex illibatæ integritatis, &c. ob. 30 Oct. 16 * *.

William Baker who is here commemorated, was steward of lord Abergavenny, and his wife was sister of Dr. David Lewis, judge of the admiralty, buried in the chapel of the north aisle. There is also a tablet to the memory of his son Richard Baker, counsellor at law. William and Richard are remarkable as the father and brother of David Baker, a learned benedictine friar, whose sudden conversion, singular character, and literary labours are recorded by Anthony Wood *.

Among numerous tablets in the church, the clerk never fails to point out a whimsical epitaph inscribed on a sepulchral stone in the nave :

“ Here lyeth one of Abel’s race,
 “ Whom Cain did hvnt from place to place ;
 “ Yet not dismaid abovt he went,
 “ Working vntill his daies were spent.
 “ Now having done he takes a nap,
 “ Here in ovr common Mother’s lap,
 “ Waiting to heare the Bridegroom say,
 “ Arise my Deare and come away.”
 “ Obiit Hen: Maurice, 30 die Julii, 1682.”

At the northern extremity of the choir are two whole length female figures recumbent, of freestone whitewashed, of rude and ancient sculpture, and much dilapidated. In the old manuscript quoted by Gough, they are called heiresses of Braiose, lords of Abergavenny. All the distinctions which might lead to ascertain the person represented by the first figure are defaced. According to Churchyard, who in a marginal note, calls her “ *a lady of some noble house whose name I*

knowe

* Athenæ Oxonienses, vol 2. p. 7.

knowe not," she held a squirrel on her hand, from which a tale was fabricated, that in endeavouring to catch her squirrel she fell from a wall, and was killed. The effigies of the woman at her feet, holds a heart in her hand, and bears on her breast a shield charged with three large fleurs de lis. These were the arms of the lords of Werndee, and seem to indicate, that the person here interred was Christian, heirs of Werndee, who married Adam ap Reginald, descendant of Henry Fitzherbert, lord of Lanllowel, and common ancestor of the different branches of the Herberts.

At the extremity of the northern aisle is a small chapel called the Lewis chapel, from the monument of Dr. David Lewis, which is placed at its northern side, and remarkable for being formed out of a single piece of stone. The effigies is recumbent, dressed in a long robe, with the hand upon a book; an anchor carved on the front alludes to his office as judge of the admiralty. Of him, Anthony Wood says, "David Lewis of All Souls college; he was afterwards principal of Jesus college, judge of the high court of admiralty, master of St. Katherine's hospital, near to the tower of London, one of the masters in chancery, and of her majesty's requests. He died on Monday the 27th of April 1584, in the college called Doctor's Commons at London; whereupon his body was conveyed to Abergavenny in Monmouthshire, where it was buried on the 24th of May following, in the north chancel of the church there, under a fair tomb, erected by him while living, which yet remains as an ornament to that church *." He was seated at Landewi Rytherch; the mansion and estate continued in the possession of his descendants till about the middle of this century, when they were sold to the trustees of the will of Charles Williams of Caerleon, and united with the Coldbrook estate.

In the window, over the sepulchre of Dr. Lewis, is the recumbent effigies, coarsely carved in wood, of a man with his hands uplifted, and the left leg crossed over the right; he has a helmet and short coat of mail; his feet rest on an animal, which is headless, but from the claws appears to be a lion. This is undoubtedly the same figure which is described in an old manuscript quoted by

* *Athenæ Oxonienses*, vol. 1. Fasti, p. 72.

by Gough *, and from the arms of *Valence* and *Hastings* once emblazoned in the window above, was probably John de *Hastings*, lord of Abergavenny, who espoused Isabel, daughter and coheirefs of Adomare de *Valence* earl of Pembroke.

In the middle window of the north aisle of the choir is a colossal figure of St. Christopher, with a long beard and flowing hair, carved out of a single piece of wood. I am informed by my friend Mr. Evans, that in Roman catholic times, it was the custom at funerals to carry the corpse into the northern aisle, and present it to St. Christopher, whose figure was usually there placed, and that still in several places, (so prevalent is long habit) the bearers frequently carry the coffin through the northern aisle.

In the chancel, within the rails, I noticed a sepulchral stone placed in the upper part of the side wall, inscribed with some Latin verses to the memory of the family of Roberts, and was struck with their elegance and classical purity. I read them at first with much satisfaction as the work of a stranger; but my pleasure was considerably heightened on discovering that they were composed by Dr. Roberts, late provost of Eton college, the amenity of whose manners, and the purity of whose taste are still remembered and regretted by his friends; and by none more than myself, who had the happiness to receive his instructions at that early period, when the mind readily admits new impressions, and is moulded into form by the skilful hand of the preceptor †.

“Clauditur hic generis series—Vos pace sepulti,
 “Majorum cineres requiescite; cum tuba mortis
 “Terribili clangore fores effringet ahenas,
 “E tumulis exite, domusque intrate Piorum.
 “O semper deslende mihi Pater, optima Mater,
 “Frater amate, vale; tibi, te mandante, tuisque,

“Saxa

* “In a window in an isle of the north ende of the quire of the saide church, is there a very ould monument in Irish oake lying crossle leggd, the left legg uppermost crosseinge the right with gilt spurs on, and on his armour his furcoate, but there is neither any expression of armes or crest. Whos it

“is I could not learne, most probably to bee one of the auncient lords of Abergavenny; for in the window over him and in the border of the window is Valence; his armes were Hastings, and probably he belonged to the family of Valence, for they have bin aunciently lordes of Abergavenny likewise.”

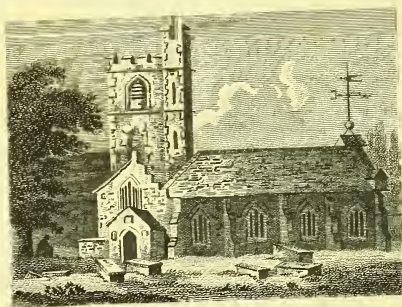
Gough's Camden, art. Monmouthshire.

† “Artificemque suo ducit sub police vultum.”

Perfius, Sat. 5.

" Saxa paro, structoque libens hæc carmina busto
 " Qualiacunque fero. Nos longè a rure paterno
 " Dulcibus a campis, ubi lætas strata lapillis
 " Isca lavat segetes, alia hinc in fata vocamur.
 " Quod si forte velit Deus, ut volventibus annis
 " Hæc aliquas repetat nostri loca nominis hæres,
 " Ite pii cives, oro, memoresque meorum
 " Dilectus initurum ædes agnoscite, nato
 " Gratantes reduci—Tuque O sanctissima tellus,
 " Ossibus his proavum et redivivo pulvere facta
 " Insignem pietate pari, et virtutis amore,
 " Cognatos inter gremio complectere manes."

" W. H. R. C. E. P."



ABERGAVENNY CHURCH

CHAPTER 20.

Excursions to the Summits of the Sugar Loaf and Great Skyrrid.

HAVING received repeated accounts of the different and contrasted views from the tops of the Sugar Loaf and Skyrrid, I determined to visit them on the same day. I departed at seven in the morning from Abergavenny, rode about a mile along the Hereford road, mounted the eastern side of the Derry, in the dry bed of a torrent, came to a heathy down, and gently ascended to the bottom of the ridge, which below appears like a cone, and is called the Sugar Loaf.

The sides of the mountain are covered with heath, whortle-berries, and moss, to the height of a foot, which renders the ascent so extremely easy, that a light carriage might be driven to the base of the cone, not more than one hundred paces from the summit. I dismounted near a rock, which emerges from the side of the ridge, forming a natural wall, and reached the top without the smallest difficulty. This elevated point, which crowns the summit of the four hills, is an insulated ridge, about a quarter of a mile in length, and two hundred yards in breadth, with broken crags starting up amid the moss and heath with which it is covered.

The view from this point is magnificent, extensive and diversified. It commands the counties of Radnor, Salop, Brecknock, Monmouth, Glamorgan, Hereford, Worcester, Gloucester, Somerset, and Wilts. To the west extends the long and beautiful Vale of the Uſk, winding in the recesses of the mountains, and expanding to the south into the fertile plain, which is terminated by the Clytha hills. Above it towers the magnificent Bloreng, almost equal in height to the point on which I stood; and in the midst rises the undulating swell of the

Little Skyrriid, appearing like a gentle eminence feathered with wood. To the north a bleak, dreary, sublime mass of mountains, stretches in a circular range from the extremity of the Black mountains above Lanthony to the Table Rock near Crickhowel; the commencement of the great chain which extends from these confines of Monmouthshire, across North Wales, to the Irish Sea. To the east I looked down on the broken crags of the Great Skyrriid, which starts up in the midst of a rich and cultivated region. Beyond, the Malvern hills, the Graig, the Garway, and the eminences above Monmouth, bound the horizon. Above, and on the side of Brecknockshire, all was clear and bright; but below, and to the south, there was much vapour and mist, which obscured the prospect, and prevented my seeing the distant Severn, and the hills in Somersetshire and Gloucestershire.

This elevated point rises 1852 feet perpendicular from the mouth of the Gavenney, and is seen from Bitcomb Hill, near Longleat, in the county of Wilts, and from the Stiper Stones in the county of Salop, near the borders of Montgomeryshire.

During my continuance on the summit, I felt that extreme satisfaction which I always experience, when elevated on the highest point of the circumjacent country. The air is more pure, the body more active, and the mind more serene; lifted up above the dwellings of man, we discard all groveling and earthly passions; the thoughts assume a character of sublimity, proportionate to the grandeur of the surrounding objects, and as the body approaches nearer to the ethereal regions, the soul imbibes a portion of their unalterable purity*.

Reluctantly quitting the summit, I walked down the side of the Derry, facing the precipitous crags of the dark Skyrriid, and in an hour entered the Hereford road, two miles from Abergavenny, where I arrived at half past eleven †.

After taking some refreshment and repose, I departed at two for the summit of the Skyrriid, on horseback, and accompanied with the same guide who had conducted me to the top of the Sugar Loaf. Having rode two miles along the road leading to White Castle, we attempted to ascend towards the south-western part

* Rousseau.

† I would recommend travellers who visit the top

of the Sugar Loaf, to ascend the Derry from the Hereford road, and to descend the side of the Rolben.

part of the mountain, which is distinguished with three small fissures. I soon discovered that the guide was unacquainted with the way, and on enquiring of a farmer, was informed that the usual route led by Landewi Skyrrid; by his direction, however, we continued at the foot of the mountain, through fields of corn and pasture, and then proceeded along a narrow path, overspread with high broom, which in many places quite covered my horse. Forcing our way with some difficulty through this heathy wood, we rode over a moor, by the side of the stone wall and hedge which stretch at the base, reached the path leading from Landewi Skyrrid, and ascended, on foot, the grassy slope of the mountain.

The heat was so intense, the fatigue I had undergone in the day so considerable, and the effort I impatiently made to reach the summit so violent, that when I looked down from the narrow and desolated ridge, the boundless expanse around and beneath, which suddenly burst upon my sight, overcame me. I felt a mixed sensation of animation and lassitude, horror and delight, such as I scarcely ever before experienced even in the Alps of Switzerland; my spirits almost failed, even curiosity was suspended, and I threw myself exhausted on the ground. These sensations increased during my continuance on the summit: I several times attempted to walk along the ridge, but my head became so giddy, as I looked down the precipitous sides, and particularly towards the great fissure, that I could not remain standing. I strongly felt the force of Edgar's exclamation, upon the summit of Dover cliff, which is no more than a molehill in comparison with this eminence:

—————"How fearful.

"And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!"

—————"I'll look no more,

"Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight,

"Topple down headlong."

I seemed only safe when extended on the ground, and was not therefore in a condition to examine and describe the beauties of the view. However, I took out my pencil, and made a few hasty notes. The ridge of the Skyrrid seemed to be about a mile in length, extremely narrow, in general not more than thirty or forty feet broad, and in some places only ten or twelve; its craggy surface is
partly

partly covered with scant and ruffet herbage, and exhibits only a stunted thorn, which heightens the dreariness of its aspect. After remaining half an hour on the top, incapable of making any further observations, I descended, and went round the eastern side of the mountain, where it terminates in an abrupt precipice near the large fissure.

I walked across the meadows, along a gradual descent, through fine groves of oaks and Spanish chestnuts, to Lanvihangel house, an old mansion belonging to the earl of Oxford. It was the ancient seat of the Arnold family, and was sold in 1722 to auditor Harley, ancestor of the present earl. It is now inhabited only by a farmer, and contains nothing but some old furniture, a few family pictures, and some good impressions of Hogarth's prints. The place is distinguished by avenues of Scots firs, which are the largest and finest in England. From the grounds near the front of the house, the Skyrrid presents itself with peculiar effect, the fissure seems like an enormous chasm, separating two mountains, whose impending and craggy summits vie in height and ruggedness.

It was near six o'clock, and I hastened to join a party returning from the ruins of Lanthony Abbey. I partook of an elegant collation, provided by my friend Mr. Greene, which was spread on the banks of the Honddy: the wine, "*Interiore notâ Falerni*," was cooled in the limpid and murmuring stream; the evening was placid and serene, and I forgot the fatigues of the day, in convivial intercourse and social conversation.

On my return to Abergavenny, the moon shining in full splendour, gleamed on the craggy ridge of the Skyrrid, and tinged, with its silvery rays, the undulating and woody sides of the Derry; forming a contrast of beauty and sublimity.

In a subsequent tour, I made a second expedition to the top of the Skyrrid. I rode along the Ross road, as far as Landewi Skyrrid, where there is an old gothic mansion, now a farm house; it formerly belonged to the family of Greville, was sold by the late earl of Warwick to Henry Wilmot, esq. secretary to the lord chancellor, and is now in the possession of his son. From this place I followed a narrow stony bridle-way till I reached the extremity of the Skyrrid, and walked up the same grassy path which I had ascended in my first excursion.

I attained

I attained the summit without making those violent exertions, or experiencing the fatigue which I had before undergone, and admired the prospect without the smallest sensation of uneasiness or lassitude. I ascended to the highest point of the mountain at its north-eastern extremity, where a small circular cavity is formed near the verge of the precipice; it is supposed to be the site of a Roman catholic chapel, dedicated to St. Michael, from which the Skyrriid has derived one of its appellations of St. Michael's mount. I could observe no traces either of walls or foundations; the entrance, which is to the south-west, is marked by two upright stones, two feet in height, on one of which are rudely carved several letters, amongst which I could only distinguish "TURNER 1671." To this place many Roman catholics in the vicinity, are said to repair annually on Michaelmas eve, and perform their devotions. The earth of this spot is likewise considered as sacred, and was formerly carried away to cure diseases, and to sprinkle the coffins of those who were interred; but whether this superstitious practice still continues I was not able to ascertain.

I seated myself on the brow of the cliff, overhanging the rich groves of Lanvihangel house, and surveyed at my leisure the diversified expanse of country which stretched beneath and around. Although the summit of the Skyrriid is less elevated than that of the Sugar Loaf, yet its insulated situation, abrupt declivity, and craggy fissures, produce an effect more sublime and striking than the smooth and undulating surface of the Sugar Loaf and Derry. On the north-east and east, an extensive and fertile region stretches from the center of Herefordshire to the Valley of the Usk, which though a succession of hill and dale, yet appears a vast plain, broken by a few solitary eminences, and bounded by distant hills gradually losing themselves in the horizon. The spires of Hereford cathedral gleam in the distant prospect, the remains of Grosmont castle are faintly distinguished under the Graig and Garway, and the majestic ruins of White Castle tower above the church of Landewi Skyrriid. To the south, the gentle swell of the Little Skyrriid rises like a hillock above the town of Abergavenny, the feathered hills of Clytha, tufted with the Coed y Bunedd, and backed with the Pencamawr, beyond which appears the æstuary of the Severn,

Severn, under the cultivated eminences of Gloucestershire and Somersetshire, To the south-west, the eye catches a glimpse of the Uſk, purſuing through copſes and meads its ſerpentine courſe, under a continued chain of wooded acclivities. To the weſt and north-weſt I looked down on a grand and dreary maſs of mountains, extending from Abergavenny beyond the frontiers of Herefordſhire, and domineered by the elegant cone of the Sugar Loaf. The Black mountains form the northern extremity of this chain, and are interſected by the ſequeſtered valley of the Honddy. Beneath yawned the abyſs of the ſtupendous fiſſure, which appears to have been cauſed by ſome violent convulſion of nature, and according to the legends of ſuperſtition, was rent aſunder by the earthquake, at the crucifixion of our Saviour: hence it is alſo denominated the Holy mountain, by which name it is chiefly diſtinguiſhed among the natives.

After contemplating the chafm above, I endeavoured to enter it down the weſtern ſide of the mountain; but finding the declivity too precipitous, re-mounted the ridge, and deſcended the gentler ſlope to the eaſt. Proceeding along its baſe, I turned round its north-eaſtern extremity, which terminates in an abrupt and tremendous precipice, and paſſing over fragments of rock, entered the fiſſure, on the north-weſtern ſide of the mountain. This chafm is not leſs than three hundred feet in breadth; the rugged ſide of the Skyrrid riſes perpendicular as a wall, to an amazing height:

—————“ the ſhrill gorged lark ſo far

“ Cannot be ſeen or heard.”

The oppoſite crag is equally perpendicular, though far leſs elevated. At ſome diſtance it appears like an enormous fragment, ſeparated from the mountain. Its ſhape, and the ſtrata of the rock, reſemble that part of the Skyrrid from which it ſeems to have been detached; but a nearer view convinced me that it never could have fallen from the ſummit. Many ſimilar fiſſures I obſerved in the Alps, and they are common in mountainous regions. The frequent ſprings, oozing through the interfices of the rocks, undermine the foundation, and the vaſt maſſes, thus deprived of ſupport, either ſink, or are ſeparated from each other, till by degrees great chafms are formed, and the mountain ſeems

to have been rent afunder. The western side of the smaller crag, which bounds the fissure, is wholly overhung with underwood, and forms a singular contrast with the bare and rugged precipice of the parent mountain.

I quitted this interesting mountain with regret, at the approach of evening, and as I rode slowly through the narrow vale, which separates the Skyrriid from the Pen y Vale hills; I looked up to the "Dread summit of the craggy bourn" on which I had experienced such various sensations:

"Skirrid! remembrance thy loved scene renews;

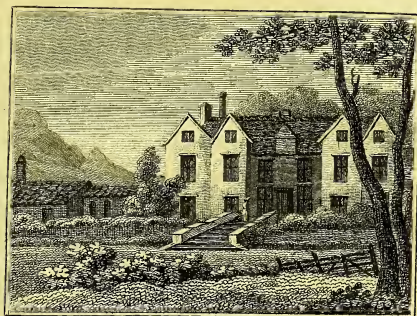
"Fancy yet lingering on thy shaggy brow,

"Beholds around the lengthened landscape glow;

"Which charmed, when late the day-beam's parting hues

"Purpled the distant cliff."

Sotheby's Poems, p. 57.



R.H. del.

LLANVIRANGEL.

W.B. Scriver.

Published March 1. 1800. by Cadell & Davies, Strand.

CHAPTER 21.

Twy Dee.—Werndee.—Ancient Seat of the Herbert Family.—Landeilo Bertholly.—Ancient Grant.—Excursion to the Derry, Rolben, and Lanwenarth Hills.—View from the Summit of the Little Skyrrid.

THE neighbourhood of Abergavenny abounds with delightful situations, and one of the most delightful is Twy Dee, the seat of William Dinwoody, esq. which stands at the distance of a mile from the town, to the south of the road leading to Ross. The house and grounds occupy the brow and sides of a gentle rise, which gradually slopes to the banks of the Usk; part of Abergavenny, surmounted by the tower of the church, appears sweeping round the foot of the Derry; the semicircle of mountains, from the Great Skyrrid to the Bloreng, contrasted in their height, shape, and colour, swell from the vale, and are peculiarly discriminated.

This spot exhibits the striking characteristics of a Monmouthshire view, where the extremes of wildness and fertility are, like the colours of a picture, blended into each other. The effect is different, but equally pleasing in spring and autumn; in spring, the intermixture of corn, pasture, and wood, forms a mantle of verdure, which gradually becomes less vivid, until it harmonises with the russet tops of the mountains; in autumn the different hues are strongly opposed, and form a more variegated, though less harmonious picture.

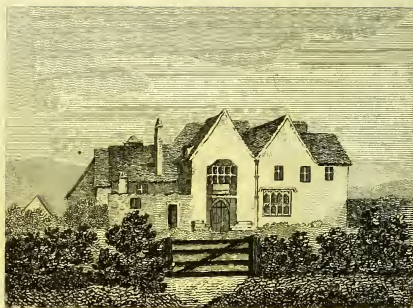
In this agreeable retreat, I had the pleasure of passing several days. Mr. Dinwoody, to whom I carried a letter from Mr. Gough, received me with great
frankness



J. Taylor del.

W. B. Davis.

WERNDÉE



J. Taylor del.

W. B. Davis.

PENTHİR



J. Taylor del.

W. B. Davis.

TREOWEN



J. Taylor del.

W. B. Davis.

CARLUCH

frankness and cordiality, and favoured me with much information, particularly on the trade and present state of Abergavenny. He likewise obligingly accompanied me in several excursions, in which I derived great advantage from his local knowledge.

We walked to Werndee, or as it is called in ancient deeds, Gwaryndee, the seat of the ancestors of the Herberts, and distinguished as the cradle of the Herbert family in Monmouthshire, which is situated on the left of the high road leading from Abergavenny to Ross. Great difference of opinion subsists concerning the real ancestor of the Herberts, and the origin of the name. In an old pedigree, possessed by Mr Jones of Clytha, which is printed in the History of Monmouthshire, the original ancestor is Henry (or, as Edmonson calls him, Herbert) Fitz Herbert, chamberlain of king Henry the first, husband of Lucy, daughter and coheir of Robert Corbet, of Alcester castle, in the county of Warwick. But the pedigree formed by the Welsh genealogists, at the order of Edward the fourth, which is still preserved in the heralds' office, derives the family from Herbert Fitz Roy, natural son of Henry the first. This difference of opinion may be reconciled, as the above-mentioned Lucy Corbet was concubine to the king, and wife of the lord chamberlain.

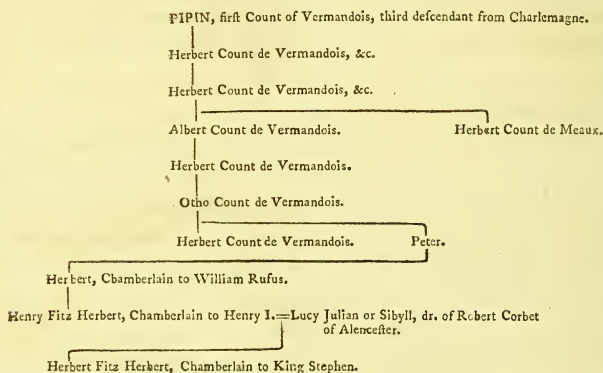
The derivation of Herbert has given rise to much controversy. Some etymologists have asserted that Gwillim ap Jenkin, of Gwaryndee, was called from his beauty, *Hir-pert* *; but the name of Herbert was common in the family long before Gwillim ap Jenkin, and was often used as a mark of distinction by the different branches; thus his father, Jenkin ap Adam, was occasionally called John Herbert. Several of his ancestors had the name of Herbert, which appears to have been common in the different provinces of France before the conquest; and not less than five counts of Vermandois and Meaux †, from whom the lord chamberlain was lineally descended, are distinguished by that appellation. Hence it appears, that Herbert was not a Welsh name, but introduced by the Normans soon after the conquest.

* *Hir* signifies *tall*, and *pert*, pronounced *bert*, *handsome*, but according to others *smart* or *pretty*.

† See the note in the next page.

According to the pedigree of the family, preserved at the heralds' office, Adam Fitz Herbert, lord of Lanllowell, lineal descendant from Herbert, lord chamberlain to king Henry the first, espoused Christian, daughter of Gwaryndee, or the Black, lord of Landeilo; his second son, Jenkin ap Adam, the same who is called John Herbert, is first styled lord of Gwaryndee; his son Gwillim had four sons, from whom four different branches of the Herberts are descended. From the eldest, Jenkin ap Gwillim, are derived the Progers, who occupied this ancient seat; the house and estate of Werndee remained in the direct line, till the income gradually diminished to £.200 a year.

The last male of this line was William Proger, who died twenty years ago, leaving an only daughter, now a nun; he sold the estate, reserving the usufruct during his life, to Mr. Lee, father of Mrs. Jones of Lanarth, who is now the proprietor; it is inhabited by a tenant, and is converted into a modern house. Scarcely any remains of the ancient mansion exist, except an old oak staircase,



staircase, and some walls and chimneys at the back part of the house; its situation is low, in the midst of a rich plain, near the south-western extremity of the Great Skyrrid.

The house, which has been lately repaired, for the use of the tenant, was in such a state of dilapidation, that the father of the last proprietor, Mr. Proger, was in danger of perishing under the ruins of the ancient mansion, which he venerated even in decay. As we examined the house, Mr. Dinwoody related an anecdote of this Mr. Proger*, which exhibits his pride of ancestry in a striking point of view. A stranger, whom he accidentally met at the foot of the Skyrrid, made various enquiries respecting the country, the prospects, and the neighbouring houses, and among others, asked "Whose is this antique mansion before us?" "That, Sir, is Werndee, a very ancient house; for *out* of it *came* the earls of Pembroke, of the first line, and the earls of Pembroke of the second line; the lords Herbert of Cherbury, the Herberts of Coldbrook, Rumney, Caerdiff, and York; the Morgans of Acton; the earl of Hunfdon; the Jones's of Treowen and Lanarth, and all the Powells. *Out* of this house also, by the female line, *came* the dukes of Beaufort."—"And pray, Sir, who lives there now?" "I do, Sir," "Then pardon me, and accept a piece of advice: *Come out* of it yourself, or 'twill tumble and crush you."

Being desirous of visiting the four hills, which form the base of the Sugar Loaf, I rode from Twy Dee, in company with Mr. Dinwoody. We proceeded through a hollow stony road, which leads to Landeilo Bertholly, in which parish Twy Dee is situated, for the purpose of inspecting a curious deed, preserved in the church chest, under three locks. It is a grant of pasturage, and other liberties, in the forest of Moyl, from Jasper, duke of Bedford, as lord of Abergavenny, to the "parishioners, dwellers and inhabitants within the borders and limits of Lantillio "Pertholey, Chapel and Lanwenarth citra Ufk." The original grant is in Latin, with the seal appended, and is accompanied with a translation made in 1748, signed by the minister and principal landholders, which is inserted in the Appendix.

* For another instance of his family pride, see the chapter on Perthir.

Appendix. The church, an ancient building, in the early style of gothic architecture, stands on the eastern bank of the Gavenny, from which situation the parish, as I have before observed, is divided into *citra* and *ultra*. In the vale to the north of the church are two fulling mills, and dye houses, the only remains of that manufactory of woollen cloth which formerly flourished at Abergavenny.

Continuing our ride from Landeilo, we passed an ancient mansion, called the White House, the residence of the Floyers, entered the Hereford road, and ascending the Derry, crossed the Kibby, a mountain stream, which flows through the dingle separating the Derry and the Rolben, mounted the sides of the Rolben, and came to another dingle, which lies between the Rolben and Graig Lanwenarth. The precipitous sides of these dingles are mantled with thickets of oak, and watered by torrents, which heighten the effect of the romantic scenery, by their incessant roar and glistening foam. We rode up the bed of this stream, and then ascended the sides of the Graig Lanwenarth, thickly covered with underwood, until we reached the foot of the Sugar Loaf.

We then rode along the heathy margin which forms the brow of the Rolben, and descending from our horses, walked down its steep side, and passed through a trench and bank, still called the park wall, which runs along the tops of the Derry and Rolben, and encloses a circumference of not less than four or five miles; formerly a park belonging to the priory. Mr. Dinwoody pointed out to me the lodge, now a farm house, pleasantly situated in the midst of a wood, between the Derry and the Rolben, and just below the source of the Kibby. We continued our descent to a place called Port y Park, or Park Gate, in the midst of wild forest scenery, then turned to the east, crossed the Kibby, and went down the sides of the Derry to the Hill House, a delightful place, belonging to Mr. Morgan, overlooking Abergavenny and the vale of the Usk, with the Little Skyrrid, swelling in the back ground. In our progress we passed the reservoir, supplied by the water of the Kibby for the use of the town; and returned through Abergavenny to Twy Dee.

I was much pleased with this excursion; the hills abound with picturesque
scenes,

scenes, and command extensive prospects. At one time, enveloped in wood, we saw nothing but surrounding trees, and

“The wild brook babbling down the mountain’s side;”

at another, burst upon prospects equally grand, extensive, and diversified.

On the morning in which I took my departure from the hospitable mansion of Twy Dee, Mr. Dinwoody accompanied me to the summit of the Little Skyrriid. The view from the Sugar Loaf and the Great Skyrriid is more sublime and extensive; but this prospect is the most delightful and elegant in Monmouthshire: it is sufficiently distant to produce the effect of landscape; yet not so extensive as to render the objects indistinct. Beneath, the vale stretches from Crickhowel to the Clytha hills, watered by the Usk, meandering through rich tracts of corn, pasture, and wood, occasionally lost in the midst of thickets, and again bursting into view. Above the right bank of this beautiful river, extend the chain of wooded eminences, from the extremity of the Bloreng to the rich groves of Pont y Pool park; from the left sweeps the fertile district in which the mansions of Clytha, Lanarth, and Llanfaraed are situated. The distant and cultivated parts of Herefordshire present themselves on each side of the majestic and independent Skyrriid. To the west of the Skyrriid, rises an enormous mass of mountains; among which are most conspicuous the long line of the Black mountains, the russet top of the Brynaro, the towering point of the Sugar Loaf, and the magnificent swell of the Bloreng. The four undulating eminences which support the Sugar Loaf are peculiarly discriminated, and Abergavenny, seated at their feet, is seen to the greatest advantage. As we caught a bird’s eye view of the town, with its white houses illuminated by the rays of a meridian sun, and relieved by the surrounding verdure, it appeared like the picture of a camera obscura. Turning our eyes to the south, we looked down upon Coldbrook house, which stands at the foot of the hill, and embosomed in wood, exhibits the appearance of an elegant and placid retirement. Part of this eminence belongs to lord Abergavenny, and part to Mr. Hanbury Williams, who has a lease of the remainder. He has made some pleasant rides around the sides

and

and summit, which are delightful from the contrast of the surrounding scenery ; varying from plain to mountain, and from fertility to wildness.

From this point Mr. Dinwoody turned my attention to the regular series of fortresses, which stretch diagonally through the midland parts of the county, from the confines of Herefordshire to the Severn, and which he justly supposes were erected not only to keep the natives in subjection, but as a line of fortification to prevent the incursions of the neighbouring mountaineers, who always entertained the greatest animosity against the inhabitants of the lowlands, and whom they considered as the vassals of their Saxon invaders*.

* See the introductory chapter on the castles of Monmouthshire.







